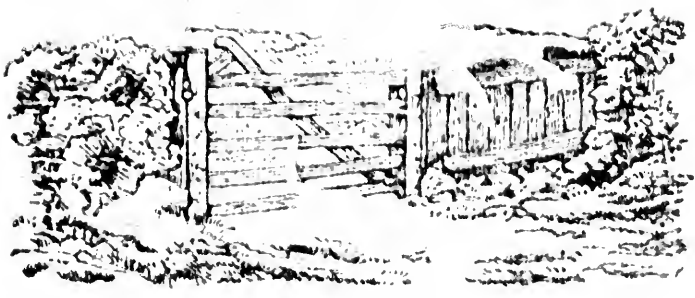


# The Overgrown Garden





JOHN A. SEAVERNS







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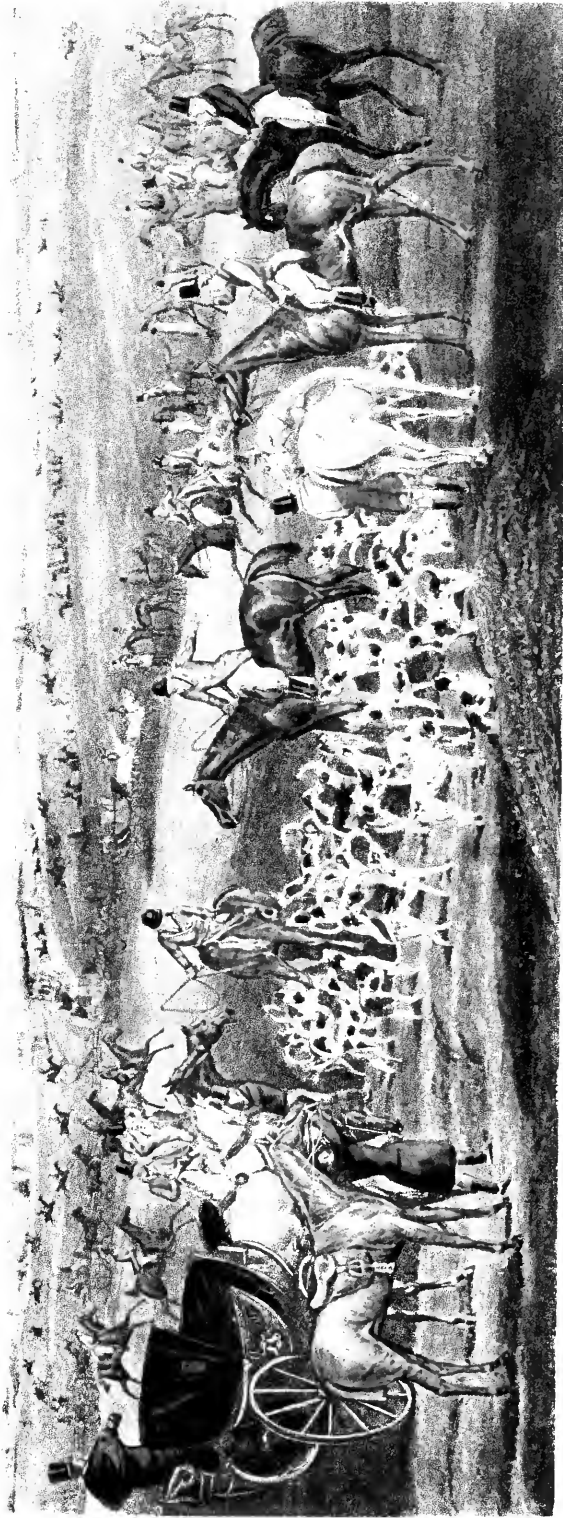


THE QUORN HUNT  
AND ITS MASTERS

W. C. A. BLEW







*Jack Steens.*

*Mr. Osbaldeston.*

THE MEET. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



BY

WILLIAM C. A. BLEW

(EDITOR OF VYNER'S "NOTITIA VENATICA," AND DELMÉ RADCLIFFE'S "NOBLE  
SCIENCE OF FOX-HUNTING," "BRIGHTON AND ITS COACHES")

WITH 24 ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN BY

HENRY ALKEN

12 OF WHICH ARE COLOURED BY HAND

ALSO A COLOURED MAP OF THE QUORN  
AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES



LONDON

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MDCCCXCIX

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## PREFACE

WHEN the idea of compiling this book was originally conceived, the intention was that it should enter more into detail than was subsequently found to be possible without making the work unduly bulky. On this account it is that runs are mentioned sparingly. Captain Pennell-Elmhirst's "The Cream of Leicestershire" and "The Best Season on Record," though extending over no more than seven years, together exceed the size of this outline sketch. An account of a good run, penned by one who can both ride and write, makes charming reading, but a mere enumeration of the points touched would interest no one. After perusing the diary kept for about ten years by "Cork-legged Jones" (see p. 51), and the accounts of other runs, one is perhaps warranted in arriving at the conclusion that sport aforesaid did not materially differ from that enjoyed at the present day.

Nearly all the history of the Quorn which has already been printed has concerned Mr. Meynell, Mr. Assheton Smith, and Mr. Osbaldeston, and as so much has been said about the two latter, the reason is given at page 85 why these two heroes are here dealt with somewhat shortly. All available sources have been searched, and the aim has been to give as many as possible of little-known facts and anecdotes, and not to reproduce, to a greater extent than is absolutely necessary, matter which in book, newspaper, and magazine has been published over and over again.

Great difficulty has been encountered in spelling names of places and coverts. Various readings are to be found in maps, directories, and guide-books, and I have no means of saying whether the manner adopted in these pages of spelling Munday's Gorse and many other places is correct. In old accounts of runs (in some modern accounts too) Ellar's Gorse has been spelled Ella's; Kinoulton sometimes has two n's, sometimes one only; there is also a doubt whether Glen Gorse should have another letter tacked on to it.

In putting forth this book I have to render my best thanks to the proprietors of the *Leicester Journal* for their kindness in allowing me access to their back files; to the proprietors of *Baily's Magazine* for permission to reprint "The Dream of an Old Meltonian," and to my friends, Mr. E. Penton and Mr. W. F. Boulton, for the valuable assistance they have rendered.

LONDON, *November* 1898.

*PUBLISHER'S NOTE*

*The hand-coloured plates and other illustrations, all after HENRY ALKEN, are among the best and most spirited of his drawings. They depict runs and other incidents in the Quorn country.*



## TABLE OF MASTERS, HUNTSMEN, AND WHIPPERS-IN

Year.	Master.	Huntsman.	Whipper-In.
	Mr. Boothby (died 1752)		
1753 } 1775 }	Mr. Meynell (no particulars)		
1770 } 1777 } 1797 }	Mr. Meynell	John Raven	J. Jones
1798 }	"	"	"
1800 }	"	"	J. Harrison
1804 }	Lord Sefton	{ J. Raven { S. Goodall	{ J. Harrison { T. Wingfield
1805	Lord Foley	J. Harrison	{ T. Wingfield { Dick Burton
1806 }	Mr. Assheton Smith	Himself	{ T. Day { J. Harrison
1817 }	Mr. Osbaldeston	Himself	{ Tom Sebright { T. Stevens
1820 }	Sir Bellingham Graham		
1821 }	"		
1822 }	Mr. Osbaldeston	Himself	{ Dick Burton { T. Day
1823 }	"		Dick Burton
1824 }	Lord Southampton	Dick Burton	Will Derry
1826 }	"	"	"
1827 }	"	"	"
1828 }	"	G. Mountford	{ Will Derry { George Beers
1829 }	"	"	"
1830 }	Sir Harry Goodricke	"	"
1831 }	"	"	"
1832 }	"	"	"
1833 }	Mr. Holyoake	"	"
1834 }	"	"	"
1835 }	Mr. Rowland Errington	"	"
1836 }	"	"	{ Will Derry { Tom Ball
1837 }	"	"	"
1838 }	Lord Suffield	C. Treadwell	T. Adamson
1839 }	Mr. T. Hodgson	Webb	
1840 }	"	Tom Day	
1841 }	Mr. Greene	"	
1846 }	"	"	
1847 }	Sir Richard Sutton	{ J. Morgan } { R. Robinson }	Ben Morgan <sup>1</sup>
1855 }	"	"	"
1856 }	Lord Stamford	Benj. Boothroyd	{ Samuel Bacon { James Maiden
1857 }	"	John Treadwell	{ Samuel Bacon { William Martin
1858 }	"	"	{ Dan Berkshire { George Pickhard
1859 }	"	"	"
1860 }	"	"	{ James Macbride { James Batsford
1861 }	"	"	{ James Macbride { James Young
1862 }	"	"	"
1863 }	Mr. J. W. Clowes	John Goddard	{ James Macbride { Thomas Firr

<sup>1</sup> For part of the time.

## TABLE OF MASTERS, ETC.

Year.	Master.	Huntsman.	Whippers-In.
1864	Mr. J. W. Clowes	John Goddard	{ James Macbride Edwin Summers
1865	"	"	{ James Macbride William Snaith
1866	Marquis of Hastings	Charles Pike	{ Philip Toccock Stephen Winkworth
1867	"	Thomas Wilson	{ J. Hollins C. Jones
1868	Mr. J. C. Musters	{ The Master and Frank Gillard	{ John Machin John Goddard, jun.
1869	"	Frank Gillard	"
1870	Mr. J. Coupland	James Macbride	{ Thomas Wiggins F. Payne
1871	"	"	{ Thomas Wiggins Robert Smethurst
1872	"	Tom Firr	"
1873	"	"	{ George Gillson Robert Smethurst
1874	"	"	"
1875	"	"	{ George Gillson William Webb
1876	"	"	{ William Wells William Wilson
1877	"	"	"
1878	"	"	{ Edward Haynes William Spiller
1879	"	"	{ Edward Haynes Berry Cassell
1880	"	"	{ George Cotterill Charles Smith
1881	"	"	{ George Cotterill Alfred Earp
1882	"	"	{ Charles Jones Alfred Earp
1883	"	"	{ Charles Curtis Alfred Earp
1884	Lord Manners	"	{ Alfred Earp G. Beams
1885	"	"	{ Alfred Earp Steven Burtenshaw
1886	Captain Warner	"	{ Alfred Earp Robert Brown
1887	"	"	"
1888	"	"	{ Alfred Earp William West
1889	"	"	"
1890	{ Captain Warner and Mr. W. B. Paget }	"	{ Alfred Earp William Capell
1891	"	"	{ Alfred Earp Thomas Parker
1892	"	"	"
1893	Earl of Lonsdale	"	"
1894	"	"	{ Alfred Earp Walter Keyte
1895	"	"	"
1896	"	"	"
1897	"	"	"
1898	Captain E. B. Hartopp	"	{ T. Gabbetis Walter Keyte



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DRAWN BY HENRY ALKEN

AND COLOURED BY HAND

- I. THE MEET.—Let us suppose ourselves at Ashby Pasture, in the Quorn Country, with Mr. Osbaldeston's hounds.—Let us indulge ourselves with a fine morning, in the first week of February, and at least two hundred well-mounted men by the cover's side.—Time being called—say a quarter-past eleven, nearly our great-grandfathers' dinner-hour—the hounds approach the gorse . . . . . *Frontispiece*
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- III. DRAWING COVER.—“HARK IN, HARK !” with a slight cheer, and perhaps one wave of his cap, says Mr. Osbaldeston, and in an instant he has not a hound at his horse's heels.—In a very short time the gorse appears shaken in various parts of the cover—apparently from an unknown cause, not a single hound being for some minutes visible. Presently one or two appear, leaping over some old furze which they cannot push through, and exhibit to the field their glossy skins and spotted sides.—The cover shakes more than ever. Every stem appears alive, and it reminds us of a cornfield waving in the wind. In two minutes the stems of some more hounds are seen flourishing above the gorse. “HAVE AT HIM THERE !” hollas the Squire—the gorse still more alive, and hounds leaping over each other's backs. “HAVE AT HIM THERE AGAIN—a fox for a hundred !” reiterates the Squire, putting his finger in his ear, and uttering a scream which, not being set to music, we cannot give here.—Jack Stevens looks at his watch. At this moment “John White,” “Val. Maher,” “Frank Holyoake,” and others are seen creeping gently on towards a point at which they think it probable he may break, and Billy Coke comes up at the rate of thirty miles an hour on Advance, with a label pinned on his back, “HE KICKS.”—At this interesting period a snob, just arrived from a very rural country, and unknown to any one, but determined to witness the start, gets into a conspicuous situation. “Come away, sir !” hollas the Master ; “what mischief are

you doing there? Do you think YOU can catch the fox?"—A breathless silence ensues.—At length a whimper is heard in the cover, like the voice of a dog in a dream: it is Flourisher, and the Squire cheers him to the echo. In an instant a hound challenges—and another—and another. 'Tis enough. "TALLY-HO!" cries a countryman in a tree . . . *To face page*

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IV. TALLY-HO AND AWAY.—"He's gone," exclaims Lord Alvanley, and clapping spurs to his horse, in an instant is in the front rank. As all good sportsmen would say, "Ware, hounds!" cries Sir Harry Goodricke. "Give them time," exclaims Mr. John Moore. "That's right," says Mr. Osbaldeston, "spoil your own sport, as usual." "GO ALONG," roars out Mr. Holyoake, "there are three couple of hounds on the scent." "That's your sort," says Billy Coke. A turn and a momentary loss of scent in the few hounds that have shot ahead, joins head and tail together, and the scent being good, every hound settles to his fox; the pace gradually improves; VIRES ACQUIRIT EUNDO; A TERRIBLE BURST IS THE RESULT . . . . . *To face page*

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V. THE PACE BEGINS TO TELL.—After running at best pace for nineteen minutes the hounds come to a fault, and for a moment the fox has a chance. The Squire hits him off like a workman, and the pack again settle to the scent. Some begin to show symptoms of distress. Two horses are seen loose in the distance, a report is flying about that one of the field is badly hurt, and something is heard of a collar-bone being broken, others say it is a leg; but the pace is TOO GOOD to inquire. A cracking of rails is now heard, and one gentleman's horse is to be seen resting, nearly balanced, across one of them, his rider being on his back in the ditch, which is on the landing side. "Who is he?" says Lord Brudenell to Jack Stevens. "Can't tell, my lord; but I thought it was a queerish place when I came o'er it before him." It is evidently a case of peril, but the pace is TOO GOOD to afford help *To face page*

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VI. "SNOB" IS BEAT.—"Snob" all this time has gone quite in the first flight, and is here in the best of company. Wishing, however, to out-Herod Herod, and to have a fine story to tell when he gets home, he pushes to his speed on ground on which all Leicestershire men are careful, and the death-warrant of the little bay horse is signed. It is true, he gets first to the gate, and has no idea of opening it; sees it contains five new and strong bars, that will neither bend nor break; has a great idea of a fall, but no idea of refusing; presses his hat firmly on his head, and gets his whip-hand at liberty to give the good little nag a refresher; but all at once he perceives it will not do. When attempting to collect him for the effort, he finds his mouth dead and his neck stiff;

fancies he hears something like a wheezing in his throat, and, discovering quite unexpectedly that the gate would open, places the hook of his whip under the latch, just as John White goes over it close to the hinge-post, and Captain Ross, upon Clinker, follows him . . . . . *To face page* 160

VII. FULL CRY, SECOND HORSES.—Another short check enables thirteen men out of two hundred to get their second horses, and the hounds again settle to the scent at a truly killing pace. “HOLD HARD, HOLYOAKE!” exclaims Mr. Osbaldeston (now mounted on Blucher), knowing what double-quick time he would be marching to, with fresh pipes to play upon, and the crowd well shaken off; “pray don’t press ’em too hard, and we shall be sure to kill our fox. HAVE AT HIM THERE, Abigail and Fickle, good bitches—see what a head they are carrying! I’ll bet a thousand they kill him.” The country appears better and better. “He’s taking a capital line,” exclaims Sir Harry Goodricke. “Worth a dozen Reform Bills,” shouts Sir Francis Burdett, sitting erect upon Sampson, and putting his head straight at a yawner. “We shall have the Whissendine brook,” cries Mr. Maher, who knows every field in the country, “for he is making straight for Teigh.” “And a bumper too, after last night’s rain,” hollas Captain Berkeley, determined to get first to some still rails in a corner. “So much the better,” says Lord Alvanley; “I like a bumper at all times.” “A fig for the Whissendine,” cries Lord Gardner: “I am on the best water-jumper in my stable” . . . . . *To face page* 192

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- IX. THE DEATH.—The *Æneid* of Virgil ends with a death, and a chase is not complete without it. The fox dies within half a mile of Woodwell Head, evidently his point from the first; the pack pulling him down in the middle of a large grass field, every hound but one at his brush. Jack Stevens with him in his hands would be a subject worthy of Edwin Landseer himself: a black-thorn, which has laid hold of his cheek, has besmeared his upper garments with blood, and one side of his head and cap are cased in mud, by a fall he has had in a lane, his horse having alighted in the ruts from a high flight of rails; but he has ridden the same horse throughout the run, and has handled him so well, he could have gone two miles farther, if the chase had been continued so long.—Osbaldeston's who-hoop might have been heard to Cottesmore had the wind set in that direction, and every man present is ecstatic with delight. "Quite the cream of the thing," says Lord Gardner. "The cream of everything in the shape of fox-hunting," observes that excellent sportsman Sir James Musgrave, looking at that moment at his watch. "Just ten miles, as the crow flies, in one hour and ten minutes, with but two trifling checks, over the finest country in the world." "WHAT SUPERB HOUNDS ARE THESE!" added the baronet, as he turned his horse's head to the wind. "You are right," says Colonel Lowther, "they are perfect. I wish my father had seen them do their work to-day."—Some of the field now come up who could not live in the first flight; but as there is no jealousy here, they congratulate each other on the fine day's sport, and each man turns his head towards home *To face page* 272
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DRAWN BY HENRY ALKEN

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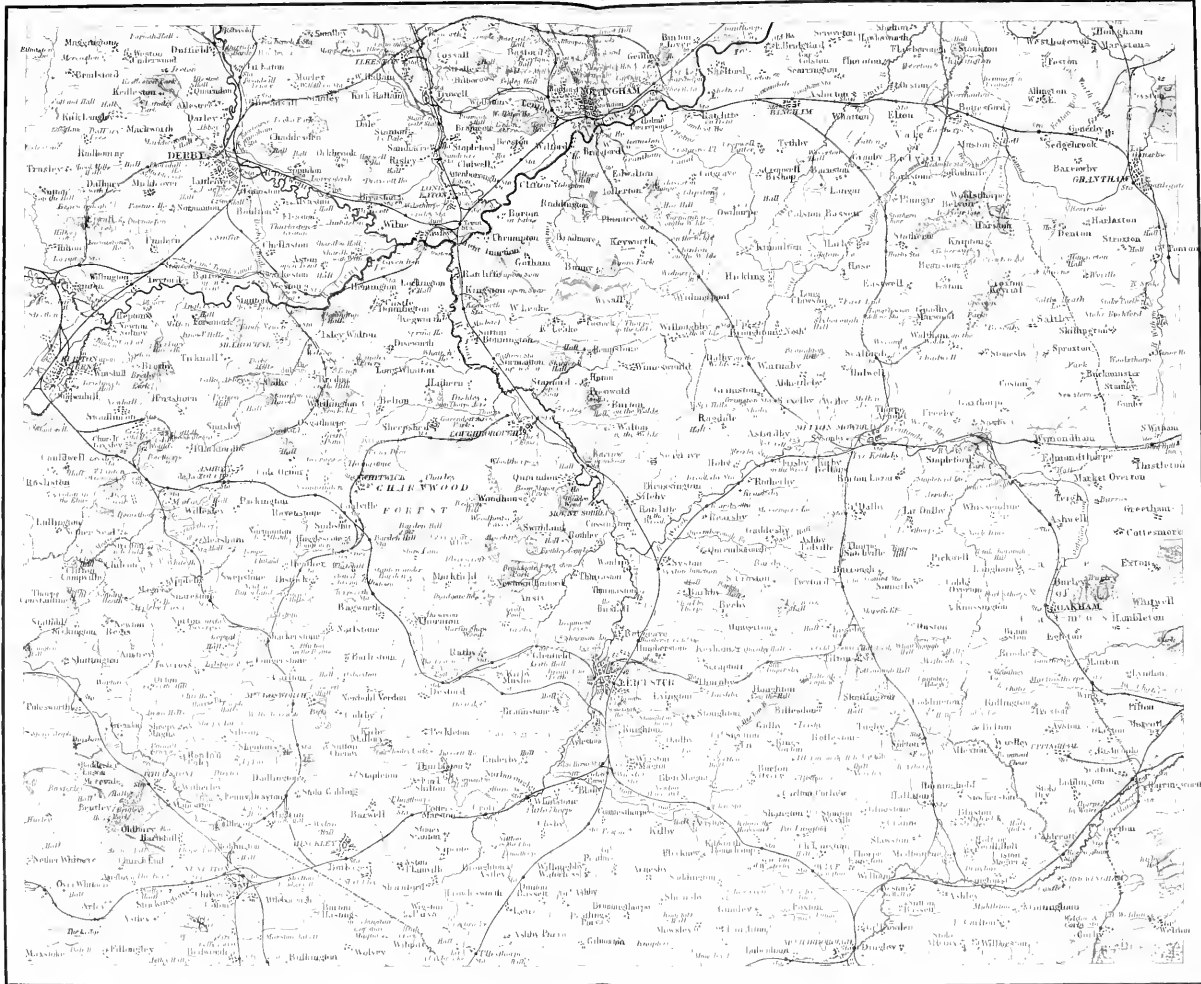








# MAP OF THE QUORN AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES





## CHAPTER I

THE QUORN COUNTRY: ITS HOUNDS  
AND KENNELS

MELTON MOWBRAY

THE QUORN KENNELS

THE QUORN HOUNDS



## CHAPTER I

### THE QUORN COUNTRY: ITS HOUNDS AND KENNELS

THE boundaries of hunting countries are ever changing, and hunting geography is exceedingly difficult to learn thoroughly, as the old Boodle's Committee and the present Masters of Foxhounds' Association could tell us. If we take in hand the first edition of Hobson's "Fox-hunting Atlas," we can now hardly recognise the face of England, so many are the new names and new boundaries.

The Quorn country has had its fair share of changes, which it is the aim of this chapter to point out. One hardly knows over what extent of country Mr. Boothby roamed, but his limits were probably wider than those of Mr. Meynell, who hunted from Clifton Gardens, near Nottingham, to Market Harborough, even if he did go a little wider. He had at his command what are now the Quorn, Mr. Fernie's, and a portion of the Atherstone countries, besides other slips of ground which have since been absorbed into other hunts. In Mr. Meynell's time, however, a greater extent of country than at present was needed. There were not nearly so many foxes in the country as there now are, and Mr. Meynell, like the Earls of Berkeley, the Dukes of Beaufort, and other masters, was probably accustomed to visit distant parts of his territory at intervals, for the number of square miles which now suffice for two days a week would not in

the last century have found sport for one day in a fortnight or three weeks ; moreover, vulpecide was possibly more common then than it now is. In reading the accounts of the different runs, however, it is necessary to remember that the country was far more open than it is at present, and except for an occasional boundary fence, hounds might run for miles without meeting with much to stop them.

There is no necessity to discuss at length the precise boundaries of the Quorn Hunt in the days of Mr. Boothby and Mr. Meynell ; it will suffice to say that the famous hunt in question was shorn of some of its country towards the latter end of the reign of Mr. Assheton Smith (1806-17), when in or about the year 1814 Mr. Osbaldeston brought his hounds from Nottinghamshire and first made the Atherstone a separate hunt. Portions of the country had, it is true, been hunted by other masters ; but with the advent of the Squire the Quorn country was deprived of part of its ground. There was then no change, at least no material change, until the year 1834, when Mr. Holyoake was getting near to the end of his two years' mastership. Then it was that the second Marquis of Hastings, a right good sportsman, who kept a smart pack of harriers, being desirous of having more hunting nearer home, induced Mr. Holyoake to cede to him a portion of his country on the Donington side, and building kennels at his residence, appointed Will Head as his huntsman, his whippers - in being William Markwell and Edward Evans.

The Donington country, as it was called, took in some of the forest, and stretched away into Derbyshire, and, as the Marquis of Hastings announced his intention of hunting three days a week, there was every chance of those who lived at a distance from the centre of the Quorn country enjoying an increased amount of sport,

for there were then seven or eight days with hounds instead of four. After hunting the country in excellent style for about seven years, the Marquis of Hastings, who loved nothing better than to pass his time at home at his own place and amongst his own people, relinquished the hounds in 1842, and they then became a subscription pack. The marquis lent the hounds and kennels; gave £500 a year to the hunt, and said that he would give more if necessary. The new master was Mr. G. B. Story, of Lockington Hall, an excellent sportsman, and a first-rate man to be at the head of a hunt, being full of tact and energy.

One reason why the Donington hounds were so popular, at least for a time, was that neither Mr. Osbaldeston, Lord Southampton, Sir Harry Goodricke, nor Mr. Holyoake had hunted the country fairly. The Melton clique, it was said, used their utmost endeavours to induce the several masters to confine their operations to the Melton district. The result was that on the Donington side foxes were freely destroyed, and as one man said, "Foxes which are seldom or never hunted are a luxury which no one can afford in these hard times." The Marquis of Hastings, of course, knew all about this state of things, and it weighed with him not a little in his desire to hunt the Donington country himself. About a couple of years after the Marquis of Hastings resigned the country, that is to say, in January 1844, he died; and for a short period after his death the country continued to be hunted with something like the vigour which had characterised the rule of the late master. A feeling of respect to the memory of the Marquis of Hastings doubtless prompted sundry of the Donington sportsmen to continue to lend a helping hand, while they also felt that the Quorn, as then constituted, was not strong enough to hunt their side of the country fairly. Sir H. Blane, Mr. Sutton of Shardlow Hall, and Mr. Story did all that

in them lay to promote sport; but by degrees, as the hunt had lost the assistance of the Marquis of Hastings, support fell off in other quarters, and in April 1851, about midway through the mastership of Sir Richard Sutton, the Donington country was handed over to him, and once more became part and parcel of the Quorn Hunt, and when the hounds were sold by Mr. Breary at the kennels, Sir Richard was a liberal buyer, his purchase being fifteen couples for £404, 5s. Mr. Villebois, Sir Watkin Wynn, Mr. Mure, and Mr. Healey Greaves were the other buyers, and the total was £669, 18s. From this period Sir Richard Sutton hunted the Donington side himself, and so did some succeeding masters.

There was no further division of the country until the beginning of the season 1876-77. Mr. Coupland had then been six years in office, and as the tenth Lord Ferrers, whose seat was at Staunton Harold, was anxious to hunt the old Donington country two days a week, a slice of country was lent to him by the Quorn. He built kennels on his own property, and filled them with the hounds with which Mr. Standish had been hunting the New Forest country. Mr. Standish sold them to Mr. Theodore Mansel Talbot, who first of all kept harriers; then migrated to the Ledbury country for a short spell, returning eventually to hunt Glamorganshire, and after being master for four years sold his hounds to Lord Ferrers, replacing them with a pack he bought from Mr. J. C. Musters; but these he did not live to hunt, as he died in 1876. Though for various reasons Lord Ferrers's country did not appeal to the Meltonians, it was good sporting country, and was well hunted until 1887, when the Quorn gave notice that they should require it back, whereupon about ninety hunting and non-hunting tenant-farmers, together with several land-owners, presented a petition requesting Lord Ferrers to continue to hunt the country. With that request he was,



of course, unable to comply, and what had aforesaid been the Donington country once more reverted to the parent pack, and is still (1898) hunted by the Quorn.

Turn we now to the Harborough side. This was hunted by Sir Richard Sutton, in common with the rest of the Quorn country, down to the year 1853, when, finding the Quorn country too big for him, he entrusted the Billesdon, or South Quorn, side to his son Richard.<sup>1</sup> The latter was not able to show very grand sport during his first two seasons, his exertions being thwarted by excessive drought. At the beginning of his third season Sir Richard died, when the two sons, Richard and Frank, carried on the two countries for the remainder of the season until Lord Stamford came to the fore.

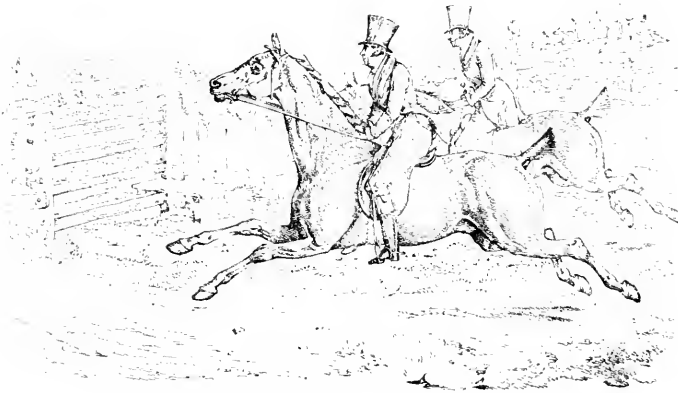
Ben Boothroyd, who had hunted the Donington under Sir H. Seymour Blane and Mr. Story, went as kennel huntsman and first whip to Mr. Richard Sutton, and on his retirement hunted for Lord Stamford for one season. This brings us to the date of Lord Stamford's taking the Quorn Hunt in 1856. I believe that the actual terms

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Richard Sutton, the second son of Sir Richard Sutton, had a somewhat varied career. Born at Sudbrooke Hall in Lincolnshire on the 21st October 1821, he entered the navy as a first-class volunteer on board H.M.S. *Pique*, commanded by the Hon. Captain (afterwards Admiral) Rous, of turf fame. Mr. Sutton was on the *Pique* during her memorable voyage from Quebec, when, after getting ashore and bumping on the rocks for about ten hours, with the loss of nearly all her guns, Captain Rous brought her home very much disabled. From the *Pique* Mr. Sutton went to the *President*, on the South American station, with Captain Scott, where he remained for two years and a half. Then casting aside his blue coat he donned a red one, joining the 1st Life Guards, in which regiment he remained but a short time. Meantime his sporting proclivities had always been strong. When no more than six years old he was put on a pony which his father had bought from old Mason, the dealer, of Stilton. Sir Richard then living at Lundford Hall, close to Buckenham, the residence of General Peel, the younger branches of the two families were wont to amuse themselves by having impromptu races on their ponies, and on one occasion young Dick Sutton, after he had been beaten for speed on the flat by a young Peel, jumped a gate three times and challenged his conqueror to follow him. Then, as already mentioned, he was entrusted by his father with the Harborough side.

of Lord Stamford's offer were to hunt without a subscription the same amount of country that Sir Richard Sutton had hunted over, and as the new master dispensed with a subscription, it was considered expedient to allow him to have his way in this respect.

This was eventually the *fons et origo* of a dispute which raged long and hotly in the Quorn and Billesdon countries. On one side it was said that Lord Stamford had abandoned the Billesdon country; on the other it was urged that the country was lent only, just as part of the Cottesmore with some woodlands were loaned. A short time after Lord Stamford's succession to office Mr. W. W. Tailby, amid great acclamation, became master of the Billesdon, or South Quorn, country, formerly hunted by Mr. Sutton, and, with Jack Goddard for his huntsman, began a brilliant era of sport. At this lapse of time there is no need to follow the dispute which ultimately took place. Suffice it to say that in due time the Cottesmore, then in the hands of Colonel Lowther, afterwards Lord Lonsdale, gave notice that they would require back the country they had lent, and Mr. Coupland at the same time intimated that he would like back the Quorn portion, though this request was not made until Mr. Tailby had announced his intention of resigning. Then it was that a somewhat bitter dispute arose. Meetings were held, various opinions were expressed, and a great deal of angry correspondence took place. To cut a long and not very interesting story short, the matter was referred to the Masters of Foxhounds' Committee at Boodle's, that body deciding in favour of the Quorn being entitled to reclaim the country which Lord Stamford did not want to hunt, and which he allowed Mr. Tailby to have. That decision, however, did not please every one. Farmers were asked in a letter to stand out for their rights; "Who's Boodle? Where does he live?"

The point gained, however, further opposition on the part of the Quorn authority was withdrawn. Mr. Tailby consented to hunt a limited area two days a week ; resigning in 1880 to Sir Bache Cunard, who was succeeded in 1888 by Mr. Fernie, and in this manner is Leicestershire now mapped out.



## MELTON MOWBRAY

MELTON, a country town which is to all intents and purposes kept alive by fox-hunting, is a very different place from what it once was, in fact in Mr. Meynell's earlier days it had practically no existence. Leicester and Loughborough were the places towards which Mr. Meynell's followers gravitated, and it was at Loughborough that the Quorndon Club was established, long before the Old Club at Melton was ever dreamed of. Mr. Ralph Lambton, afterwards master of the famous Lambton Hounds (subsequently bought by Lord Suffield), after leaving Cambridge "without a shilling of debt," made the Grand Tour, and in 1787 succeeded his father as member for Durham; and it was in the same year that he enrolled himself as one of Mr. Meynell's followers, making the Quorndon Club his headquarters. Those, however, were the days of somewhat boisterous merriment, and Mr. Lambton, who was a quiet and somewhat shy man, finding his companions rather too high-spirited for him, cast about for a quieter location and eventually selected "the unfrequented town of Melton," and he is said to have been the first man to take a house there. Nowadays it seems strange that a Leicestershire fox-hunter should have gone to Melton to find solitude! Mr. Lambton, however, lived in what has been described as a style of great magnificence. He had a fine stud, and was most hospitable.

It was not long before other famous sportsmen followed Mr. Ralph Lambton's example. Lords Forester

and Delamere (then Messrs. Forester and Cholmondeley) and two or three others had for some time lived at Loughborough to hunt with Mr. Meynell; they eventually removed to Melton, took a house, where they were joined by Mr. Smythe Owen of Condover Hall, Shropshire, and that dwelling eventually became the Old Club, the members of which were restricted to four, that being the number of the best bedrooms. Soon after the establishment of the Old Club, putting up horses for auction was a common proceeding after dinner. "Parties," writes "The Druid," in *Scott and Sebright*, "were often made on purpose, and after a couple of bottles of claret, business became quite brisk. Each owner had one reserve bid, and it was quite a sight the next morning to watch the different horses change stables, to the great bewilderment of the grooms. Several were very sweet on the Widow (the property of Captain White) the first day she came out, and £400 was put under the candlestick. The captain's reserve bid was £100 above that sum, and after the Billesdon Coplow day, Lord Middleton did not scruple to close further!! This 'putting up' practice, however, soon died out." Later on, while still the club, this became the home of the four M's—Sir James Musgrave and Messrs. Maher, Maxse, and Moore—who were included in these lines:—

First the Old Club Men, a compact of four  
Sporting old Ladies, led on by John Moore;  
Val Maher on Potash and Musgrave behind,  
On his Titus, so testy, comes panting for wind.  
But hark forward! one hero is here to be found—  
The merry Jem Maxse; and show me the pack  
That he cannot ride up to on old Cognac.

Subsequently two younger clubs came into existence. Lord Alvanley's old house, opposite the George, became the New Club, and Sir Harry Goodricke's Lord Rokeby's Club. Within comparatively recent years

there was some talk about establishing a club on a larger scale, to accommodate those who did not care about the expense involved in hotels or a private establishment ; but so far as is known the project came to nothing.

Lord Alvanley, mentioned just now, was quite one of the foremost of the Meltonians for a good many years, roughly speaking, from 1808 or thereabouts till well into the thirties. He was rather a character in his way, and wore, says Mr. Birch Reynardson, "the most monstrous pair of boots that perhaps ever were seen on any man's legs. At one time he wore ordinary top-boots ; but one day he appeared at the covert side in a pair of boots the upper extremities of which were like those worn by the Household cavalry, though the tops began in the usual place. A former Duke of Rutland injured one of his knees by a thorn piercing it, so he had one boot made in order to protect the injured limb. Lord Alvanley took the hint, and caused several pairs to be made to the pattern, as bullfinches were then common enough in Leicestershire. In some ways these boots were a grand invention ; but they had their drawbacks, as being open above the knee, dead wood and thorns would occasionally fall into them, work down to the calves, and then tickle his lordship no end." Lord Alvanley was one of the jokers of the hunt, but some of his jests do not appear always to have been in the best of taste. On one occasion he encountered at Brighton Lord Foley—not the Lord Foley who was master of the Quorn hounds, but a later holder of the title. Lord Foley was rather deformed and so went into society comparatively little, devoting himself, after he gave up racing, to his carriage-horses. Said Lord Alvanley to Lord Foley, "Hullo, how did you get here?" "I came *straight* from London," was the reply. "D—— it, then, you have warped a good deal on the way down," was Lord Alvanley's not very courteous retort.

Concerning the progress of Melton, "Nimrod," in an article contributed to *Fraser's Magazine*, wrote :—

When I first visited Melton there was only one inn, and that a very bad one; not one bank, and but few houses with which a well-breeched Meltonian would be satisfied. But what a change has taken place in these respects. There is nothing now wanting at Melton for any man's comforts, provided he has the means to pay for them; and there are two hotels, the George and the Harborough Arms, which equal in accommodation and comfort any that I have experience of. Some idea indeed may be formed of the style in which the Harborough is fitted up, by the fact that the very passages, upstairs and down, were entirely covered with carpet.

What would "Nimrod" have said to the Grands and Metropoles of our own time?

When people began to flock to Melton, where houses were being built by degrees, they naturally brought a good deal of money into the place; but this advantage was to a great extent counterbalanced by the rowdyism which went on, and the low practical jokes in which the visitors thought fit to indulge. Needless to say there was then no ladies' society in Melton, for men never dreamed of taking their women-folk there. Families resided in the neighbourhood, of course, and they hospitably invited to their table those visitors who were living *en garçon*; but the visitors left the wives at home. Some of Lord Waterford's exploits are mentioned in connection with Lord Stamford's mastership, but there were plenty of others ready to join him in any mad frolic in which he might indulge, while there were some who backed their collection of door-knockers, London and provincial, against that of even Lord Waterford. In the days of which one is speaking everything gave way to hunting. Long rides to covert and home again were the rule, and the hunting man of the period had little more time than to dress for dinner, dine, make his plans

for the morrow, take forty winks and be off to bed, rising early in the morning in order to be present at some distant fixture.

The Melton men always boasted that they set the fashion to the hunting world, and that when they increased or decreased the depth of the coat collar, the length or width of the skirts, or discarded tight breeches for looser garments, the provincials followed suit. Among other things, they claimed to have introduced the custom of dining in scarlet coats.<sup>1</sup> It is, we know, the case that in the Squire Western days men sat down to dinner in the red coats which they had worn during the morning; but the red dress-coat may be distinctly traced to Melton, and it is on record that an eccentric Scottish laird, Jamie Johnstone, who hunted from Melton in the long ago, startled his friends by appearing at dinner, not only in a red coat, but in a pair of scarlet leggings as well, which

<sup>1</sup> How or why the scarlet coat first came to be used for hunting I have never been able to ascertain. Many years ago there was an article in one of the London magazines about red coats, and it was therein stated that Henry II. or III., I forget which, was so pleased with a fox-hunt that he ordained it should be a royal sport and that red should be the colour of the coat. This was obvious nonsense, because it is by no means clear that red had, at that time, anything to do with the royal livery. Among the questions propounded by *Tit Bits* at a later year was one asking why scarlet came to be the recognised colour of the hunting-coat, and the answer in a following number was the same as that given above, viz., that it was due to the order of one of the Henrys. I therefore wrote to the editor asking for further information; but none was forthcoming, the correspondent who answered the question having apparently been content to copy out what had been inserted in the magazine or what appeared in "The Noble Science" by Mr. Delmé Radcliffe. At page 144 (fourth edition, Nimmo, 1893) the author says: "The custom of wearing scarlet in fox-hunting is supposed to have had its origin in the circumstance of its being a royal sport, confirmed by the mandate of one King Henry, who organised and equipped, in the royal livery of scarlet, a corps for the destruction of foxes, not after the manner which we should recognise as legitimate in the present day. This is at least a plausible and, at all events, right royal way of accounting for a habit rather of martial than sylvan import, were it not otherwise sufficiently recommended by the cheerfulness which it imparts to the aspect of the field." Then I wrote to the editor of *Notes and Queries*, who courteously inserted my question as to the origin of the scarlet coat for hunting, but no reply was ever made.



caused one of his friends to remark that he supposed Jamie wore red gaiters so that he should not be taken for a blackleg.

In due course, however, the spoliation of sign-boards, the tarring and feathering, the street brawls, all of which were, rightly or wrongly, laid to the account of the hunting visitors, gave way to a better state of things, and some time prior to 1850 Melton had become quite an exemplary place. Literary societies came into fashion, we are told; ladies came to Melton,<sup>1</sup> and everything took an upward turn. Much of the credit for this state of things is said to have been due to the Lord Wilton of the time; he who rode well up to the time of his death, when aged about eighty. Egerton Lodge had been bought from Lord Darlington, and after being altered and enlarged, became one of the finest hunting residences in the county, and there the juvenile members were accustomed to indulge in private theatricals, and give other entertainments.

Melton, like other places, has moved with the times, and now every decorum reigns supreme, and the social life of this delightful and famous hunting centre is very much like what it is in other places, all residents and visitors appearing to enjoy themselves.

One little matter there was, however, which rather upset the proprieties of Melton in 1890—the “midnight steeplechase.” A mild affair was got up, but as the moon did not serve till about midnight, the start could not take place till then; the jockeys, following the example of those who are supposed to have taken part in the mythical “first steeplechase on record,” wore white garments; the course was lit by lamps, and Melton was possibly rather lively at a later hour than

<sup>1</sup> The Duchess of Devonshire and numerous other ladies hunted with the Quorn in the time of Mr. Meynell.

usual. A detailed description of the event is unnecessary, but the affair gave rise, on the following Sunday, to what are known as "pulpit utterances," the steeplechase being denounced in more than one place of worship in the town. The vicar took for his text, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," and at the conclusion of his discourse he reminded his hearers that the Melton of 1890 was not the Melton of 1837, and that the town, while welcoming its visitors, did not want the scenes which had been common fifty-three years previously to be re-enacted. Enough, however, of the midnight steeplechase, which, after all, was not hunting.

*Pour passer le temps* on Sunday afternoons it had no doubt been the custom for some time for men to look over their friends' studs, but in the forties, if not before, "doing stables" on Sunday afternoon appears to have attained the dignity of a recognised function. Stables were made to look as trim as complicated plaiting and pipe-claying could cause them to look, and horses, like so many men, had Sunday coats, that is to say, they had special suits to be worn during visiting hours while critics, skilled and unskilled, were passing remarks upon the merits of the horses in the different studs. The wealthy Mr. Lyne Stephens clothed his horses (on Sunday) in green sheets magnificently embroidered with gold; but after a while this sort of thing struck most of the Meltonians as exceedingly absurd, and so the Sunday coat was given up almost before it was half worn out. As mentioned elsewhere, the stables of Mr. Lyne Stephens, like those of many other Meltonians, were fitted up in the very best style, though perhaps no Meltonian ever reached the standard attained by an eccentric Hertfordshire sportsman, who carried stable fittings up to the point of absurdity. The stall partitions were made of mahogany, and an elegant

lamp was suspended over each stall ; a round table was wheeled in after dinner, and to the stable the host, and any one he might have dining with him, used to retreat after dinner, and while sipping their wine would see the horses bedded up for the night.

Every stranger who went on a visit to Melton was accustomed to come away full of admiration at the condition and appearance of the horses he saw, though this was possibly nothing more than a natural sequence of the surroundings. In the first place, the horses were of the best ; the grooms were supposed to be of the true Mr. Tip-top type ; and the studs being large, no horse was overworked. Lord Plymouth had once six-and-twenty horses in his stable, and he bought another at 500 guineas in case he might want it later on ; while from a dozen to twenty was no uncommon number ; but most of the Melton men of that day are said to have been ready to buy a likely horse whether they wanted one or not. From all accounts there was great rivalry among the helpers and stud-grooms as to the appearance of the horses, which must have been at any rate a good thing for the owners, as it necessarily saved them much fault-finding. The stud-groom of the period, however, was a bit of a tyrant. Sir James Musgrave had a very good, if somewhat jealous, head man, and it was Sir James's custom to have his horses summered at his country house, where he kept them until the eve of the hunting season, when they were sent to the Melton stables. A few weeks before they were sent to Leicestershire the stud-groom, who had up to that time been feeding the horses on oats, told Sir James that the time had arrived when he must give them some beans as well. For some reason or other, Sir James Musgrave objected, whereupon the stud-groom told the baronet that he (the groom) must either buy beans out of his own pocket or else "decline his service." The groom carried his point,

and Sir James Musgrave's horses came out in their usual excellent condition.

Every one who knows anything about hunting has heard of the larking home to Melton after a poor day, and Dick Christian has left it on record that he was often "the fox." On one occasion, after the hounds had met at Melton, a long tiring day ensued. Two foxes were certainly killed; but they showed no sport. When the hounds were ordered home (this was in Sir Harry Goodricke's time), half-a-dozen men started to find their way home to Melton. Lord Gardner took the lead, and at one place came down a cropper, and lost his horse; but instead of rushing off on foot and crying, "Catch my horse! pray catch my horse!" which Assheton Smith said was such low form, he simply waited for the next man, who chanced to be Lord Wilton. As soon as the latter had cleared the fence he pulled up, Lord Gardner jumped up behind him, and the pair went sailing away after the loose horse, which some one eventually caught. Lord Gardner then mounted his own hunter, and carried on the larking to Melton.

This chapter may perhaps be fitly closed with a reproduction of the late Mr. Bromley Davenport's spirited verses.

#### THE DREAM OF AN OLD MELTONIAN

##### I

I am old, I am old, and my eyes are grown weaker,  
 My beard is as white as the foam on the sea,  
 Yet pass me the bottle, and fill me a beaker,  
 A bright brimming toast in a bumper for me!  
 Back, back through long vistas of years I am wafted,  
 But the glow at my heart's undiminished in force,  
 Deep, deep in that heart has fond memory engrafted  
 Those quick thirty minutes from Ranksboro' Gorse.

## II

What is time? the effluxion of life zoophitic  
 In dreary pursuit of position or gain.  
 What is life? the absorption of vapours mephitic,  
 And the bursting of sunlight on senses and brain!  
 Such a life have I lived—though so speedily over,  
 Condensing the joys of a century's course,  
 From the find till we eat him near Woodwellhead Cover,  
 In thirty bright minutes from Ranksboro' Gorse.

## III

Last night in St. Stephen's so wearily sitting,  
 (The member for Boreham sustained the debate),  
 Some pitying spirit that round me was flitting  
 Vouchsafed a sweet vision my pains to abate.  
 The Mace, and the Speaker, and House disappearing,  
 The leather-clad bench is a thoroughbred horse;  
 'Tis the whimpering cry of the foxhound I'm hearing,  
 And my "seat" is a pig-skin at Ranksboro' Gorse.

## IV

He's away! I can hear the identical holloa!  
 I can feel my young thoroughbred strain down the ride,  
 I can hear the dull thunder of hundreds that follow,  
 I can see my old comrades in life by my side.  
 Do I dream? all around me I see the dead riding,  
 And voices long silent re-echo with glee;  
 I can hear the far wail of the Master's vain chiding,  
 As vain as the Norseman's reproof to the sea.

## V

Vain indeed! for the bitches are racing before us—  
 Not a nose to the earth—not a stern in the air;  
 And we know by the notes of that modified chorus  
 How straight we must ride if we wish to be there!  
 With a crash o'er the turnpike, and onward I'm sailing,  
 Released from the throes of the blundering mass,  
 Which dispersed right and left as I topped the high railing  
 And shape my own course o'er the billowy grass.

## THE QUORN HUNT

## VI

Select is the circle in which I am moving,  
 Yet open and free the admission to all ;  
 Still, still more select is that company proving,  
 Weeded out by the funkier and thinned by the fall :  
 Yet here all are equals—no class legislation,  
 No privilege hinders, no family pride :  
 In the “image of war” show the pluck of the nation :  
 Ride, ancient patrician ! democracy, ride !

## VII

Oh ! gently, my young one ; the fence we are nearing  
 Is leaning towards us—’tis hairy and black,  
 The binders are strong, and necessitate clearing,  
 Or the wide ditch beyond will find room for your back.  
 Well saved ! we are over ! now far down the pastures  
 Of Ashwell the willows betoken the line  
 Of the dull-flowing stream of historic disasters ;  
 We must face, my bold young one, the dread Whissendine !

## VIII

No shallow-dug pan with a hurdle to screen it,  
 That cock-tail imposture the steeplechase brook ;  
 But the steep broken banks tell us plain, if we mean it,  
 The less we shall like it the longer we look.  
 Then steady, my young one, my place I’ve selected,  
 Above the dwarf willow ’tis sound I’ll be bail,  
 With your muscular quarters beneath you collected,  
 Prepare for a rush like the “limited mail.”

## IX

Oh ! now let me know the full worth of your breeding,  
 Brave son of Belzoni, be true to your sires,  
 Sustain old traditions—remember you’re leading  
 The cream of the cream in the shire of the shires !  
 With a quick shortened stride as the distance you measure,  
 With a crack of the nostril and cock of the ear,  
 And a rocketing bound, and we’re over, my treasure,  
 Twice nine feet of water, and landed all clear !

## X

What ! four of us only ? are these the survivors  
 Of all that rode gaily from Ranksboro's ridge ?  
 I hear the faint splash of a few hardy divers,  
 The rest are in hopeless research of a bridge ;  
*Iæ victis !* the way of the world and the winners !  
 Do we ne'er ride away from a friend in distress ?  
 Alas ! we are anti-Samaritan sinners,  
 And streaming past Stapleford, onward we press.

## XI

Ah ! don't they mean mischief, the merciless ladies ?  
 What fox can escape such implacable foes ?  
 Of the sex cruel slaughter for ever the trade is,  
 Whether human or animal—YONDER HE GOES !  
 Never more for the woodland ! his purpose has failed him,  
 Though to gain the old shelter he gallantly tries ;  
 In vain the last double, for Jezebel's nailed him ;  
 WHOO-WHOOP ! in the open the veteran dies !

## XII

Yes, four of us only ! but is it a vision ?  
 Dear lost ones, how come ye with mortals to mix ?  
 Methought that ye hunted the pastures Elysian,  
 And between us there rolled the unjumpable Styx !  
 Stay, stay but a moment ! the grass fields are fading,  
 And heavy obscurity palsies my brain ;  
 Through what country, what ploughs and what sloughs am I  
 wading ?  
 Alas ! 'tis the member for Boreham again !

## XIII

Oh glory of youth ! consolation of age !  
 Sublimest of ecstasies under the sun !  
 Though the veteran may linger too long on the stage,  
 Yet he'll drink a last toast to a fox-hunting run.  
 And oh ! young descendants of ancient top-sawyers !  
 By your lives to the world their example enforce ;  
 Whether landlords, or parsons, or statesmen, or lawyers,  
 Ride straight, as they rode it from Ranksboro' Gorse.

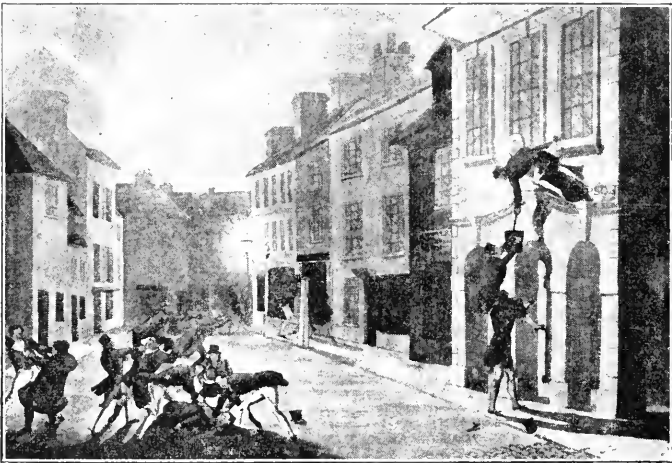
## THE QUORN HUNT

## XIV

Though a rough-riding world may bespatter your breeches,  
 Though sorrow may cross you, or slander revile,  
 Though you plunge overhead in misfortune's blind ditches,  
 Shun the gap of deception, the hand-gate of guile:  
 Oh, avoid them! for there, see the crowd is contending,  
 Ignoble the object—ill-mannered the throng;  
 Shun the miry lane, falsehood, with turns never ending,  
 Ride straight for truth's timber, no matter how strong.

## XV

I'll pound you safe over! sit steady and quiet;  
 Along the sound headland of honesty steer;  
 Beware of false holloas and juvenile riot,  
 Though the oxe of duty be wide, never fear!  
 And when the run's over of earthly existence,  
 And you get safe to ground, you will feel no remorse,  
 If you ride it—no matter what line or what distance—  
 As straight as your fathers from Ranksboro' Gorse.





## THE QUORN KENNELS

IT is something like a hundred and fifty years since Mr. Meynell began to hunt the famed Quorn country, and now after so many years, after the rule of so many masters, and so many fresh sites, the Quorn kennels are just in the place which Mr. Meynell selected as soon as he had fairly settled into harness. When he lived at Langton Hall with "Prince" Boothby, quite early in his career, Mr. Meynell kept his hounds at Bowden Inn, on the Pytchley side of his country. Quorndon Hall he afterwards bought from Lord Ferrers, about the year 1754, and the kennels there are, as subsequent events have shown, the best that could be chosen. Mr. Meynell doubtless had his eye on Charnwood Forest, then far more open than it is now, as a fine schooling-ground for hounds, and a grand area for spring and autumn hunting. It must be remembered that Mr. Meynell's country reached from near Nottingham to Market Harborough, and embraced a good deal of the present Atherstone Hunt. It is clear, therefore, that from no one base could all the fixtures have been reached.

The Bowden Inn kennels having once been found convenient, were kept on for occasional use after Quorndon Hall became the headquarters of the pack. In the time of the "Primate of the Science," too, other kennels are mentioned. The hounds sometimes went to Bradgate Park; but that was then Lord Stamford's place, so when Mr. Meynell quartered on him, it was most probably as a guest for some particular fixture. Bradley, too, is mentioned in connection with the Ravensdale side

of the country, and from all these and, at times, other places being visited by the hounds, has no doubt been suggested the idea that it was one of Mr. Meynell's fancies that his hounds should never have more than a few miles to go to covert on a hunting day, and that he always sent them by road twenty-four hours in advance. Whether Mr. Meynell did so, or whether, like the earlier Dukes of Beaufort and other masters of older time, he went for a week or two at a stretch to some outlying district, I am not able to say, for there is to be found no evidence one way or the other: the one fact remains that several kennels were utilised during Mr. Meynell's mastership.

Quorndon Hall, from the time of the Quorn's first master, came to be regarded as a sort of official residence until Lord Southampton's advent, since Lords Sefton and Foley, Mr. Assheton Smith, Mr. Osbaldeston, and Sir Bellingham Graham bought the place as they bought the hunt stock and fixtures. Lord Southampton, following the example of his predecessors, took up his abode at Quorndon in 1827; but left it for Belgrave Hall, near Leicester, in 1829 or 1830, while at the same time he built new kennels in Humberstone Gate, Leicester. But these do not appear to have been very well arranged or convenient premises, and were speedily vacated by Sir Harry Goodricke (the next in succession), who, regarding Thrussington as more central than either Leicester or Quorndon, put up new kennels there. Sir Harry's premature death, however, necessitated the choice of another master, and in 1838, when the Thrussington kennels were scarcely seven years old, they were advertised for sale and were pulled down not long afterwards. Another master who did not fancy the Quorndon kennels was Lord Suffield, who signalled the beginning of his brief reign by building new kennels at Billesdon:<sup>1</sup> but they

<sup>1</sup> The design for these kennels is said to have been furnished by Mr. Thomas (not Assheton) Smith, sometime master of the Hambledon, Craven, and Pytchley hounds. In describing the new kennels, a writer of the time

were occupied for one season only, for Mr. Hodgson went back to the old place, but had a second kennel at Oadby for the sake of convenience in hunting the Market Harborough side. In Mr. Hodgson's day, in fact down to Sir Richard Sutton's time, it will be remembered that what is now Mr. Fernie's country was hunted by the Quorn, so that now Market Harborough is not in the latter country at all, but is situate where Mr. Fernie's and the Pytchley join.

Since Mr. Sutton took the Billesdon or South Quorn country from his father, the Quorn kennels are more central than they used to be, and so are more eligible than ever, and though of most unpretending exterior, are convenient and exceedingly healthy.

The following untechnical description of the Quorn kennels, taken from a book called "Music and Friends," by William Gardiner, and published in 1838, is perhaps too curious to be left out. Speaking of Colonel Cheney, of Gadsby, the author writes :

Near the colonel's estate are the dog-kennels of the Melton Hunt, a college for rearing and educating foxhounds. It is composed of several buildings occupying some acres; the principal apartment is the dinner hall, the whole being filled with separate troughs, at each of which four dogs feed at the same time. The larder is a spacious place, in which the joints of six or seven horses are hung up every week; the whole is eaten raw, and the gourmand taste of these animals is such that they will not touch it unless it has been seasonably kept, which the insupportable stench that surrounds the place fully proves. In the kitchen are conveniences for cooking<sup>1</sup> vegetable diet, of which oatmeal forms

.....

remarked "that with the due regard to economy which guided all Lord Suffield's proceedings, there is a weighing-machine in front of the stables, so that the Leicestershire farmers could not possibly impose upon his Lordship by delivering short weight in corn, straw, or hay." On this matter, however, see pp. 178 and 179.

<sup>1</sup> Some new boilers by Messrs. Barford & Perkins of Peterborough (Mr. Barford, well known in connection with the Peterborough show, died in June 1898) have been substituted for the old blue coppers previously in use.

the principal part. The litter-houses comprise numerous berths for the mothers, where the puppies are kept until they are admitted into the junior college. In this building are lodged the young dogs from eight to twelve months old. The play-ground is a large court in front, neatly flagged and always clean. A similar one is on the western side for the older dogs. Nothing can surpass the regularity and orderly behaviour of these intelligent creatures at the dinner-hour; on the ringing of the bell, the dogs in the courtyard wait patiently until they are called by fours, when Ponto, Jowler, Music, and Trinket leave the crowd and go to their stated troughs. Other parties follow, dine, retire, and make way for the remaining sets. The kennelman cracked a long whip two or three times before he introduced the colonel and myself into the junior court. On entering I was surrounded by a score of playful whelps, who all pressed forward to be caressed. We then passed into the court of the grown-up gentry, and I followed with very different feelings. These gaunt fellows came round me with a more savage look, smelling my person in such numbers that I scarcely could proceed. The huntsman, seeing me somewhat alarmed, called out to two or three of the dogs to make way, and said, "Come on, sir, don't be afraid." I was glad when I was by the side of him and his long whip, but should not have been so easy had I known that a kennelman, who had got up in the night to appease a quarrel and had not taken the precaution to put on his clothes, had been devoured by the dogs in consequence of not being recognised by them. They picked his bones.

How many versions there are of this story, and of how many kennels it is told, it would be difficult to say: but the moral perhaps is that the incident never occurred at all—at any rate let us hope so.

No new kennels have been built since Lord Suffield's time. The Marquis of Hastings, it is true, kept some of his hounds at Donington during his short reign (1866-68); but with that exception, and save for sundry alterations and repairs, the Quorn kennels stand very much as Mr. Meynell left them. The lodging-rooms have cupola roofs covered with the old Swithland slate, which is now almost unobtainable.

## THE QUORN HOUNDS

IN attempting to sketch an outline history of the Quorn, the foxhound problem confronts one directly. It is, for instance, quite impossible to discover the source whence Mr. Boothby obtained his original pack of hounds, which he must have started about the year 1697. At that time there were very few regular fox-hunting establishments, and it could not then have been an easy matter to make up a scratch pack with drafts from various kennels. This is not the place in which to indulge in theories concerning the evolution of the foxhound, which I take leave to regard as just such another composite animal as is the blood horse.

As these pages will show, the Quorn Hunt has a history of something like two hundred years; but, except in an indirect sense, the present occupants of the kennel have no such long lineage, because, since the youthful Mr. Boothby first began to hunt the country, packs have been dispersed time after time, and it is only through chance strains, if any such exist, that the present Quorn hounds can have any relationship with Mr. Meynell's famous pack.

The pack of which Mr. Boothby was possessed was taken over, so far as one can discover, by Mr. Meynell in 1753, and that great master of hunting, by judicious breeding, no doubt improved them very much; and they in turn were sold to Lord Sefton, who added to them his hounds with which, from Combe Abbey, he had been hunting a part of Oxfordshire. It is reasonable

to assume that Mr. Meynell's hounds were crossed with those of Lord Sefton ; but we have it on the authority of "The Druid" that Mr. John Warde would never send to Mr. Meynell's kennel for new blood. He by some means obtained a couple of Mr. Meynell's cast-offs, named them Queer'em and Quornite, and used to show them to his friends as the "sort of things the Quorn people hunt foxes with." At any rate, whatever the Quorn pack was like in 1805, when Lord Sefton gave up the country after a five years' reign, so it passed into the hands of Lord Foley, his successor, who held the country for a single season only, and by that time, by whose fault one cannot tell, the pack had very much deteriorated, and were dispersed, not being good enough for his successor, Mr Assheton Smith, to take to. Mr. Musters gave up the Nottinghamshire country in 1806, when Mr. Smith took the Quorn, so the latter gave the former a thousand guineas for his hounds ; he obtained some from Belvoir and other kennels, and began his eleven years' mastership. On his resignation he took his hounds and horses into Lincolnshire, and Mr. Osbaldeston, on becoming the next master of the Quorn, brought his own ready-made pack from the Atherstone country. Sir Bellingham Graham had to find some of his own hounds though he bought a few from his predecessor, who took the rest away when he went into Hampshire, and brought them back in a couple of years when he returned to Quorn, and then after a few years' rule he took away the pick of the pack to succeed Mr. Musters in the Pytchley country.

Mr. Osbaldeston left a few old and blemished hounds, and they were not even sound. To these Lord Southampton added some from Mr. Nicholls, who then hunted the New Forest, but they were mostly suffering from kennel lameness ; a few came from Mr. Musters, and a few from Belvoir. The next step was to sell or make

away with most of this rubbish and buy the Oakley, Lord Tavistock having just given up the country ; and after a time he sold these to Mr. Russell of Warwickshire, and bought in their stead Lord Petres' Essex Union hounds, adding to them the pack of Mr. Shaw.

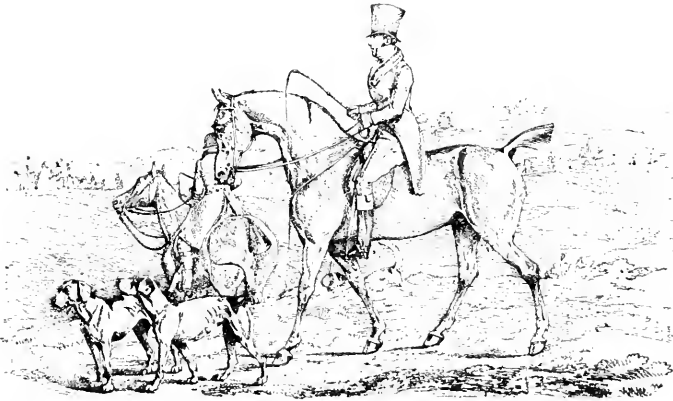
After Mr. Errington's resignation in 1838, Lord Chesterfield bought his hounds to take into the Pytchley country, and Lord Suffield, who comes next on the list, bought the Lambton hounds for three thousand guineas, and after a year sold them for one third of that sum ; so Mr. Hodgson brought with him to the Quorn country the hounds with which he had been hunting the Holderness country, and on his resignation in 1841 they were sold, Lord Ducie taking the bitch pack at a thousand guineas. Mr. Greene was the buyer of some of the lots, but when Sir Richard Sutton succeeded Mr. Greene in 1847 he brought his own pack from the Cottesmore, which necessitated Mr. Greene's hounds being dispersed. About a month after Sir Richard Sutton's death his hounds were sold at Tattersall's, seventy couples realising 1821 guineas, by no means a large price when it is remembered that their deceased owner had given the utmost attention to them ever since he first took the Burton country in 1824. They had been bred with the utmost care, and amongst the buyers were Lord Stamford, who succeeded Sir Richard Sutton, Mr. Richard Sutton, Mr. Drake, Mr. Morrell, Mr. Collier, and the committee of the Cheshire Hunt. Lord Stamford taking the lots he had purchased at Sir Richard Sutton's sale as a nucleus, added thereto the hounds with which Mr. Shaw-Hellier, a breeder of great experience, had been hunting the Southwold country, which he resigned in 1855 ; while he also bought the Bedale hounds from Mr. Mark Milbank, the Duke of Cleveland's son-in-law, who gave up the country in the same year in which Mr. Shaw-Hellier retired from Lincoln-

shire. Several couples were also obtained from other good kennels, so that Lord Stamford found himself in possession of a really good lot of hounds, and on his resignation he sold the pack to his successor, Mr. Clowes, who after a three years' rule retired and offered his kennel for sale. To the surprise of all, it was discovered that the Marquis of Hastings had purchased about half the pack, and he after two years of failure held a sale, the fourth within thirteen years. Mr. Musters, who came from South Notts in succession to the marquis, brought his own hounds with him into Leicestershire, and took them home again after an attempt at a partnership with Mr. Coupland had failed; so the latter gentleman, having to cast about for a pack, selected the Craven, which were then in the market, owing to the resignation of Mr. G. S. Willes. And these hounds, although they were subsequently more than decimated by dumb madness, are the ancestors of the present pack, which have done so well at Peterborough and in the field; and, in the interests of an historic hunt, it is to be hoped that the day is far distant when any future master of the Quorn may have to get together a scratch pack, a strait to which former masters have been reduced. Such a contingency, however, is scarcely possible, as some years ago Lord Wilton, Mr. Behrens, and the Duke of Portland (who for some seasons hunted from Melton) purchased the Quorn hounds, so as to secure them to the country. On the death of Lord Wilton his share was purchased by the Hon. Montague Curzon, of Beaumanor. The Duke of Portland, on giving up hunting in Leicestershire, liberally presented his third share to the hunt, while the members thereof purchased the one-third share of Mr. Behrens's executors when that gentleman died, so that at the present time two out of the three shares belong to the hunt.

Considerations of space preclude any detailed history



of the breeding of the pack, but mention must be made of Alfred and Watchman, who came in a Belvoir draft ; and so, too, did Contest, who brought in some of the Berkeley blood. Since that time the Quorn have bred their own hounds. The best bitches have been sent to some of the most noted stallion hounds in England, while at the present time (August 1898) the kennel has some excellent sires of its own ; but Warwickshire Hermit and other stallion hounds have been utilised.





## CHAPTER II

MR. THOMAS BOOTHBY

MR. MEYNELL (1753-1800)



## CHAPTER II

### MR. THOMAS BOOTHBY

IT is now a good many years ago since a brilliant horseman, who annually betook himself to Melton Mowbray, defined an ideal hunting country as one which should contain no covert which hounds could not draw thoroughly in twenty minutes, and whose surface should show no hill long enough, or steep enough, to blow a horse in good condition. To these not inconsiderable advantages the sportsman might have added the entire absence of plough, of any fence which the best combination of man and horse could not surmount, and, as a matter of course, that no wire, barbed or otherwise, should lurk in unsuspected places.

If Leicestershire cannot entirely comply with all these requirements, it remains, at any rate, the acknowledged headquarters of fox-hunting, while its physical characteristics have attracted the unbounded admiration of successive generations of fox-hunters for at least a century. "Nimrod" began his Leicestershire hunting tour with the words that Leicestershire "may justly be denominated the Montpelier of hunting countries; in the eyes of a sportsman it is a Vale of Cashmere, and in comparison with it all others retire *longo intervallo*." "Nimrod" perhaps acts the part of fugleman in praising Leicestershire, and from that day to this to take up a pen to write about Leicestershire has been to laud it. Its rich soil is favourable for holding a scent, its

wide enclosures, its few large coverts, and the famous men who have been connected with it, are among the reasons of its celebrity and popularity. It is elsewhere mentioned that, in olden days, Leicestershire was not the stiffly fenced country it now is, and the Rev. J. Curtis, who wrote a history of Leicestershire, remarked, when speaking of hunting, that the fences offered no danger, "being chiefly quicksets," not the most insignificant obstacles to-day.

Hunting, however, was evidently known to Leicester men prior to the time of Mr. Boothby, for Throsley, in his "History of Leicester," makes mention of an "innocent holiday" which had been dying out since 1707, and which must therefore have been in full swing years before. On Easter Monday it seems to have been the custom for the Mayor and Corporation, clad in their robes, to go to a certain close near the town to see a travesty of hunting. A kind of gymkhana took place in the morning, and then about noon the aniseeded carcass of a dead cat was fastened by a string to a horse's tail and dragged over the ground "in zigzag directions." Half-an-hour later the hounds were laid on, and "gave tongue in glorious concert," the people on the hills shouted, and "the horsemen, dashing after the hounds through foul passages and over fences, were emulous of taking the lead over their fellows." A regular cockney business truly, and worthy to rank with the Epping Hunt on Easter Monday when Colonel Thornton was Master of the Ceremonies, but in the eyes of the historian "it was a scene, upon the whole, of joy, the governing and the governed in the habits of freedom enjoying together an innocent and recreative amusement, serving to unite them in the bonds of friendship rather than embitter their days with discord and disunion." This is praise for the drag, indeed; but as the cat was eventually dragged through the principal streets

to the Mayor's door, that functionary was expected to entertain all comers.

The Quorn country, with which alone I am concerned, came into notoriety all at once owing to the skill and measure of success which attended the forty-seven years' mastership of the famous Hugo Meynell, of Bradley, Derbyshire, who has been called the "Pri-  
mate of the Science." He had, indeed, a predecessor, for Mr. Thomas Boothby was master of a pack of fox-hounds in Leicestershire for fifty-five years; but of the sport enjoyed during this long period we know less than we know of any single day at the present time. It is, however, improbable in the extreme that the sportsmen who lived before Mr. Boothby were unappreciative of the merits of this, the *par excellence* hunting ground, though at that time popular appreciation may have run more in favour of Charnwood Forest than of the open country. Charnwood Forest was a royal preserve as long ago as the time of William the Conqueror, who being a keen sportsman, as the term was then understood—that is to say, an intensely selfish one—forbade the peasants to feed their pigs within its boundaries; and this is about the first historical fact we hear of in connection with it. The monks of Alverscroft Priory kept hawks and an establishment of hounds up to the year 1539, when the Priory was surrendered to Henry VIII., at which time its glades are said to have sheltered the wild red deer. The "Cowering hills of Charnwood," wrote another chronicler, "once so famous in olden times, when the renowned Earls of Leicester, Winchester, and Bogham, and other great people, with their high-born dames and numerous retinues, made those hills and vales resound to the music of horn and hound, which attract the villagers to this all-exhilarating sport." Quorndon Abbey was not far from Charnwood, and its monks once laid serious complaint against one John

Comyns "for that he did once kill a hundred wild hogs in the Forest of Charnwood," that being, it was alleged, considerably in excess of the number he was entitled to slay. This was one of the earliest hunting disputes on record, and after the matter had been made the subject of a trial, the sporting rights over Charnwood Forest were divided.

Charnwood, however, kept up its reputation for sport, and in this wise does Drayton speak of the forest and its surroundings—

Oh Charnwood! be thou called the choicest of thy kind,  
 The like in any place what flood hath hapt to find?  
 No tract in all this isle, the proudest let her be,  
 Can show a sylvan nymph for beauty like to thee;  
 The Satyrs and the Fauns, by Dian set to keep  
 Rough hills and forest holts were sadly seen to weep,  
 When thy high palmed harts, the sport of boors and hounds,  
 By gripple borderers' hands were banishéd thy grounds.

In the year 1805, the year in which Mr. Meynell died, the Act of Enclosure was passed.

Such was the Quorn Hunt of antiquity. The harts and hogs no doubt found plenty of sport for successive generations of boors and others, and in due time, we may take it, the marten, cat, and the fox came to be pursued; but we have no definite information concerning Leicestershire fox-hunting until we find Mr. Thomas Boothby at the head of an establishment at the latter end of the seventeenth century. The date at which this gentleman was born, hunted, and died would probably have not been generally known were it not for the fact that in the *Field* for the 6th of November 1875, there appeared an engraving of Squire Boothby's hunting-horn—a perfectly straight horn. The sketch was sent to the paper by Mr. Reginald Corbet, of Adderley, Master of the South Cheshire Hounds. The lower portion of the horn is of silver, and the upper part towards the mouth-



piece is of some greenish material, and the whole instrument must be about eighteen inches long. This old horn bears the inscription : " Thomas Boothby, Esquire, of Tooley Park, Leicestershire. With this horn he hunted the first pack of foxhounds then in England fifty-five years. Born 1677 ; died 1752. Now the property of Thomas D'Avenant, Esquire, County of Salop, his grandson." If, by the way, Mr. Boothby himself hunted his hounds, there is at once a contradiction of the statement that Assheton Smith was the first amateur huntsman in Leicestershire.

Since the engraving of the horn first appeared, it has sometimes been thought that " the first pack of foxhounds then in England " meant the first pack ever started ; but this we know cannot be the meaning intended, as one or two hunts, the Charlton (afterwards the Goodwood) were in existence before Mr. Boothby could have kept hounds. As he died in 1752 and hunted his country for fifty-five years, he must, assuming that he kept hounds until the day of his death, have taken the country in 1697, when he was no more than twenty years of age. Tooley Park, Mr. Boothby's residence, is now in the Atherstone country, not far from the fixture Peckleton, in which place the name of Boothby is still respected, and it is said (in a letter from the Honourable and Reverend Augustus Byron, printed in Mrs. Chaworth Muster's " Hunting Songs and Sport ") that the old M.F.H. gave to the parish a peal of bells, which were so tuned " as to resemble the cry of a pack of hounds." How to accomplish this would, nowadays, probably puzzle the most skilful campanologist. In the same communication the writer states that Mr. Boothby is credited with having altered the pattern of the hunting-horn, instituting a straight instrument for that seen in old pictures, and slung round the body. In the year 1885 there was an interesting correspondence in *Notes*

*and Queries* on the subject of hunting-horns. Some of the contributors thereto were of opinion that in olden times huntsmen of foxhound packs wore the French horn slung round the body. Various reasons are put forth in favour of the French horn, but none of them are anything like conclusive. Prior to the fourth Duke of Richmond giving his foxhounds to the Prince of Wales in or about the year 1813, the French horn was unquestionably used by the huntsman of the royal pack ; but on the hunt being remodelled, and whippers-in being substituted for the old yeomen prickers, a horn of the present pattern—one slightly curved, and carried, not in a case like the straight horn used with foxhounds, but slung over the shoulder with a strap—was adopted. One of the contributors to the discussion sought to uphold the French horn by quoting a line from an old hunting song—

And the huntsman *winds* his horn.

The expression “winds,” he thought, “seems to convey some idea of curvature.” Thereupon ensued an argument as to the meaning and pronunciation of the word “winds.” It surely, so far from suggesting “curvature,” means simply that the huntsman blew it ; and the story is related of Dr. Johnson, when asked to decide whether it should be *wĩnd* or *wĩnd*, having made reply, “I cannot find it in my mind to call it *wĩnd* ; but I can find it in my mind to call it *wĩnd*.”

As already mentioned, of the details of Mr. Boothby's establishment we know nothing. It may be assumed, however, that in the course of fifty-five years the game was found to be worth the candle, or the hounds would have been given up. Tooley Park, according to Nicholl's “History of Leicestershire,” was purchased by Judith, Lady Corbett. Mr. Boothby, our M.F.H., was the son of Lady Corbett by her first husband, and at Tooley

Park they lived from about the year 1648. The Boothby family would appear to have been more or less addicted to racing, for under date 1st November 1672, five years before Mr. Thomas Boothby was born, is the entry in Isham's diary :<sup>1</sup> "Nov. 1672.—We heard that Mr. Bainbridge had won £5 at Harleston Races on the race between Mr. Hanbury and Mr. Boothby, and Saunders won £3. They also said that Boothby challenged Hanbury to run him for £100." Mr. Boothby the master of hounds married a Miss Scrimshire or Scrymshire, a lady possessed of a considerable amount of property, and took her name in addition to his own. His son, who predeceased him, had a son, and daughter, Anne. The latter married, as his second wife, Mr. Hugo Meynell, who succeeded Mr. Boothby in the mastership of the hounds. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1752 records Mr. Boothby's death in these words: "Thomas Boothby, of Tooley Park, Esquire, Leicestershire, one of the greatest sportsmen in England."

The Boothbys were a very old family, and Mrs. Boothby, an elegant woman, was likewise sprung from an ancient stock, for Mr. J. Cradock, jun., in his "Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs," published in 1828, wrote that, before he went to the jubilee of George III., Mrs. Boothby, of Tooley Park, requested him to obtain any information as to "her family of the Cloptons who were connected with Shakespeare." This Mrs. Boothby was a lady not only of commanding presence, but of much celebrity during the later years of George II. and the beginning of the reign of George III., and at that time, as Lord Denbigh declared, she "disposed of more preferment in the county of Leicester amongst her friends than any other person whatever."

Fielding, the novelist, was closely connected with

<sup>1</sup> "History of Newmarket," by J. P. Hore, vol. iii. p. 126.

the Boothbys, and it was always supposed that more than one character in "Tom Jones" was drawn from the Tooley Park district, while Mrs. Boothby is said to have been the original of Sophia Western.

On another page it is stated that Mr. Meynell married a grand-daughter of Mr. Boothby's, that lady being sister to "Prince" Boothby, as Mr. Boothby's grandson was called, on account of his reputed love for the society of great people, and his grand way of doing things. He appears to have hunted to a certain extent, and lived with Mr. Meynell at Langton Hall; but never became famous in the hunting-field. He was, as a chronicler described him, "a very respectable gentleman," among whose particular friends were the Duke of Rutland, Lords Carlisle and Derby, and Charles James Fox. He was somewhat eccentric in his dress; but his distinguishing feature was his hat, as he declined to go with the ever-changing fashion, and clung to the same shape for twenty years. With respect to his weakness for the society of great people, it was said of him that he would at any moment leave the company of a companion to walk with one of higher degree. He had chambers in Clarges Street, Piccadilly, and there, after breakfasting off cold tea, and riding his hack in the Park, he blew out his brains with a great horse-pistol because, in his own words, he was "tired of the bore of dressing and undressing."

## MR. MEYNELL

1753-1800

HOWEVER good a sportsman Mr. Boothby may have been, he was, at any rate in popular estimation, distanced by the glories of his successor, Mr. Hugo Meynell. Though said to have been descended from a family of long standing in Leicestershire and Derbyshire, Mr. Meynell at the time he took the Quorn country in 1753 owned not an acre of land in the county, though he very soon left Langton Hall and bought from Laurence, Earl Ferrers, Quorndon Hall, whither he removed the hounds (previously kept at Bowden Inn), and Quorndon Hall has since that time been the residence of several masters of the Quorn. Temporary kennels appear to have been erected at first, but those now in use were built certainly not later than 1758. Being born in June 1735 (this is doubtful, see *post*, p. 66), Mr. Meynell could have been but eighteen years of age when he first undertook the arduous task of hunting the wide-stretching Quorn country; and one of his first acts after becoming M.F.H. was to make a cock-fighting match against Sir Charles Sedley, to fight twice a year, for five years, at Ashbourne and Nottingham alternately. The stakes were ten guineas a battle, and 500 guineas the odd battle. Sir Charles Sedley was to be assisted by all Mr. Neal's cocks, and Mr. Meynell was to have as many of Sir Lynch Cotton's birds as he required.

Mr. Meynell was no Squire Western. He was quite

a society man; a very good musician, and quite a fair violinist. On the 22nd February 1760, while Laurence Earl Ferrers was lying under sentence of death for the murder of his steward, Mr. Meynell joined in readily with the local festivities. The master and the members of the hunt gave a ball, to which they invited the residents of the neighbourhood, as well as the officers of the Suffolk Militia, which regiment happened to be quartered in Leicester. The ball was opened at seven o'clock in the old Guildhall, when the supper, consisting of one hundred and sixty dishes, supplied by the landlord of the Cranes Inn, appears to have been all that could be desired, and "two hundred persons of distinction" refreshed exhausted nature. What time the company broke up after "meeting" at seven is not stated.

Mr. Meynell and his friends also patronised theatricals, for so long ago as 1760 Messrs. Darrawan's Company performed at Leicester, by special desire of the Hunt, the comedy of "Love for Love," while on the following evening the "Beggars' Opera" and a harlequin entertainment were given, the latter being especially applauded. On several subsequent occasions, too, travelling companies were in request at the Leicester theatre, and in 1776 the "Suspicious Husband," by the late ingenious Dr. B. Hoadley, "was played by request"; the after-piece was "The Deuce is in Him," and a day or two afterwards "Macbeth" made up the programme.

Mr. Meynell was High Sheriff for Derbyshire in 1758, and between the years 1761 and 1778 he had sat in Parliament as representing in succession Lichfield, Lymington, and Stafford. The *Gentleman's Magazine*<sup>1</sup> says that from 1770 to 1772 Mr. Meynell was Master of the Royal Buckhounds, a statement I have seen

<sup>1</sup> Vol. lxxxviii. (1808), p. 1134.

made in no other place.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it is in the highest degree improbable that he could have combined the two masterships, while we have nowhere the slightest hint that he ever suspended his own hunt or found a substitute for the years during which he is said to have ruled the buckhounds.

Before Mr. Meynell came of age, that is to say in 1754 (one year after taking the country), he married as his first wife Miss Anne Gell of Hopton Hall, Derbyshire,<sup>2</sup> by whom he had one son, Godfrey; and she dying there in 1757, he next married Anne, daughter of Mr. Thomas Boothby Scrimshire or Scrymshire, of Tooley Park, this lady being grand-daughter of Mr. Thomas Boothby, his predecessor in the Quorn country, and sister of "Prince" Boothby, who lived with Mr. Meynell at Langton Hall when he first took the hounds. By his second wife Mr. Meynell had two sons, Hugo, born in 1759, and Charles, born in 1768.

The situation of Quorndon Hall no doubt first attracted Mr. Meynell's attention, since it is near Charnwood Forest, a place not loved by the Leicestershire fox-hunter of to-day, but which must have appeared quite a paradise in Mr. Meynell's eyes as a schooling ground for his younger hounds; moreover, his country extended nearly from Nottingham to Harborough. According to the anonymous author of "Memoirs of the Belvoir Hounds," Mr. Meynell had some dispute about country boundaries; so a very business-like document was drawn up between Mr. Noel of the Cottessmore and himself, and the affair was settled without difficulty. At page 10 of the book, which was published

<sup>1</sup> If Mr. Meynell ever did hold this office it appears strange that nothing should have been known of it; but it is a coincidence that Mr. J. P. Hore, who compiled a list of masters from authentic sources, is unable to say with certainty who was master between 1770 and 1772.

<sup>2</sup> Now the residence of Mr. Chandos Pole Gell.

in 1867, a copy of the agreement is set out, but it is unnecessary to reproduce it here.

Of the details of Mr. Meynell's early hunting establishment and exploits we know but little. From 1791, however, to 1800 we have a tolerably good record of the sport enjoyed, since Joseph Jones, known as "Cork-legged Jones," from his having, like the first Marquis of Anglesey, a cork leg, kept a diary which was published in the year 1816. The book was dedicated to the Duke of Rutland. When Mr. Meynell first began to hunt the country he used to take out an enormous number of hounds; but experience soon taught him that an unwieldy pack was more plague than profit in the field, so he by degrees cut down the number until during his last five-and-twenty years of mastership he is said never to have taken out more than twenty couples, and often fewer than that. To some of the runs of which we have record no dates are given, but when the close of the eighteenth century was within measurable distance it was said that Mr. Meynell's hounds "had more good runs than any pack in England," a statement which is partly borne out by Jones's diary. Mr. Hawkes, the author of a very scarce treatise called the "Meynellian Science" (which gives an account of Mr. Meynell's theories and practice), refers to two runs which fell to the lot of Mr. Meynell's pack. One lasted for an hour and twenty minutes, when, without having once checked, hounds rolled over their fox by themselves. The second run lasted for two hours and fifty minutes; hounds were never once cast, and they killed their fox unaided. In November 1794, but whether earlier or later than the runs above mentioned is uncertain, a superlative day's sport was enjoyed in the shape of a run of an hour and fifty minutes without a check. They found in Ashby pastures, and after an hour they changed on to the line of a fresh fox. It was not "an



endways run," as the account says, and the only four who really rode all through were Messrs. Cholmondeley, Forester, Morant, and Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh. The huntsman and three or four others who had "skirted with judgment" came up just after the fox was killed, but the rest of a large field were quite left behind.

When Mr. Meynell first hunted the Quorn country he had but two subscribers, Lord R. Cavendish and Mr. Boothby, to help him; but as time rolled on subscriptions were asked for and were obtained. In Mr. Meynell's early days, however, fox-hunters would appear to have been a power in the land, for when Dr. Ford, vicar of Melton (author of "The Melton Hunt in 1813," see pp. 96 and 97), was preaching a charity sermon, several well-known hunting men came late into church, whereupon the learned doctor<sup>1</sup> paused to say, "Here the red-coats come, they know their Christian duties; there is not a man among them but what is good for a guinea."

In his own mode of managing a subscription pack, Mr. Meynell was from all accounts one by himself. A chronicler of the time says of him, "He had to humour as well as to contend with a race of as dashing young men in Harvey Aston, Charles Wyndham, &c., as could be found, who were continually racing against each other and before his hounds; but by the force of his laughter and the pleasantry of his observations upon them they were called to order and acknowledged their error." On two of his field one day riding in front of his hounds, he made the remark that his hounds were following the gentlemen who had kindly gone forward to see what the fox was about. Indeed, the Quorn field appears at times to have been extremely unruly, for on one occasion, when one of the greatest thrusters of the hunt was asked whether he had taken the head in a certain run, he calmly replied, "No, I was only second; but I was a field and

<sup>1</sup> *Notes and Queries*, vol. ii. p. 252.

a half in front of the hounds." According to all accounts Mr. Childe, of Kinlet, first set the example of hard riding in Leicestershire,<sup>1</sup> one of his favourite mounts being either a pure or half-bred arab; and Mr. Meynell declared that after Cecil Forester and Lord Jersey followed Mr. Childe's example of going at a "splitter-cockation pace" he never had a moment's peace. When describing what went on in the hunting-field he used to say, "First out of covert comes Cecil Forester, then the fox, and lastly my hounds." Mr. Meynell's followers, too, appear to have gone the pace, for a writer of the last century (1797) declared that the Quorndon Hunt with its mad collaterals had ruined a great many, and by the general extravagance had nearly compassed its own destruction.

To hark back for a moment to Quorndon Hall, there are two old books, "Sketch of a Tourist into Derbyshire and Yorkshire," by William Bray, published in 1783, and "Select Views in Leicestershire," by J. Throsby (1789). Both these publications state in effect that Mr. Meynell, at one period, turned Quorndon Hall into a sort of private hotel. Mr. Bray says:—

The hounds are kept by subscription; but that gentleman (Mr. Meynell) permits his servant to accommodate as many of his friends as his house will hold with apartments, where they are furnished with dinner and all provisions as at any public place. Many of those who attend the hunt and cannot get apartments in the house, and are strangers, come to the inns, and a great many hunters are kept here. The company on a field day is very numerous, and they go out with as much ceremony as to court, their hair being always dressed.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Childe may have introduced hard riding into Leicestershire; but long before Mr. Meynell had the Quorn country people rode hard elsewhere, as we have an account of the Duke of Devonshire riding down Leven Down, in Sussex, with the Charlton Hunt, and leaping a five-barred gate when he reached the foot of the hill.



Mr. Cradock. Jack Stierens.

Mr. Osbaldiston.

Mr. Coke.

Mr. White. Mr. Holyoake.

Snob

DRAWING COVER. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



The meaning of the passage concerning the apartments, dinner, and other provisions is somewhat obscure, but it surely cannot mean that the master of the Quorn took any payment; while, although Mr. Meynell was a tolerably wealthy man, his purse could hardly have stood the strain of keeping absolutely open house for nearly half a century at a stretch!

In the matter of hound-breeding, Mr. Meynell's idea as to a hound's shape did not materially differ from those of the Peterborough judges. Straight legs, good bone, and compact feet he set great store by, and what more can modern masters want, especially as the great master of the last century insisted upon good backs and shoulders; but he was equally exacting with respect to nose and stamina. Mr. Meynell had a famous old hound, Rattler by name, and when he was past work he had the run of the place; but the kitchen and the servants' hall were his favourite resorts. Rattler used to play about with several dogs in a field near the house; but no sooner did the bell ring for the servants' dinner than he immediately left his companions and bolted off for the servants' hall.

What we should now consider eccentricities were indulged in by Mr. Meynell. For example, he entered his hounds at hare, and if the hounds had to be cast in the field after the huntsman had had one try, it was in three lots in different directions, the master taking one batch himself, the huntsman a second, and the whipper-in a third. Still, whatever we may think of these matters, the pack showed such excellent sport that many notabilities were attracted to Leicestershire, and many hunters were stabled in various parts of the county. In 1795, for instance, Major-General St. Leger kept ten horses to hunt with Mr. Meynell, and Sir Henry Featherstonhaugh "daily aired thirty hunters in body clothing."

As a horseman Mr. Meynell appears to have been

amongst the best of his time ; he mounted himself and his man in the first style, and hunters were by no means cheap even then, for we read of a farmer selling one for four hundred guineas ! The author of a by no means bad account of " A Day with Old Meynell " relates how, after hounds had been running for three-quarters of an hour, all those of the field who were up with the pack were led by a pilot to a certain gateway by which alone exit from that particular enclosure was to be obtained. Imagine their disgust on discovering that the gate having been broken down, probably in the course of some other run, its place was supplied by a set of stout oak rails of the *noli me tangere* stamp. The field was looking out for Shufflers Bottom, when up came Mr. Meynell on his favourite grey, well cleared the forbidding rails in his stride, and left his field in the lurch. " Nimrod," too, gives the old Squire a testimonial for his riding abilities, for when he was out with the Quorn during the time that Lord Sefton had the hounds, he says that Mr. Meynell rode a burst of half-an-hour in grand style, and with all the enjoyment of a young man. Yet this was when Mr. Meynell was getting on for seventy years of age ; but, added Mr. Apperley, " he was always a hard rider." In the time of Mr. Boothby and Mr. Meynell, however, and for a good many years after that, Leicestershire was not the difficult country to cross it now is ; for there were far fewer fences. An old sportsman has left it on record that in Mr. Meynell's earlier days a great deal of Leicestershire was so deep as almost to deserve the appellation " boggy " ; but it carried a good scent, and a horse which could stand up for twenty minutes when hounds really ran was held to have distinguished himself. Before, however, Mr. Meynell bade the world adieu, draining had begun to improve the country from a riding point of view. According to " Nimrod," Lord Forester used to declare that there was a time when he could sit on his

horse at Melton spinney, cast his eyes around him from that commanding spot, and fail to discern a single ploughed field. The Meltonian of to-day, however, may be somewhat surprised at reading, on the strength of the same authority—

The War prices, however—wheat at a guinea a bushel, and other grain in proportion—altered the face of Leicestershire. A considerable part of the fine old green sward was turned up, and even now (1835) much of it remains under plough.

Who Mr. Meynell's first huntsman was we have no means of knowing, but the first of whom we hear anything is John Raven, who possibly went to Mr. Meynell in 1775, as in the *Leicester Journal* for the 4th of November 1775 appears an advertisement to the effect that a huntsman was required for the Leicestershire hounds: applicants were to apply to the printer of the paper. John Raven is reputed to have been a man whose power over hounds was something remarkable; but some of these old stories must be accepted with caution. It is stated, for instance, that on one occasion Mr. Meynell's hounds ran a fox into a rather small gorse, in which there was a danger of his being chopped. Thereupon the pack were stopped with a wave of the hand, and drawn out of covert. A couple of old hounds were then set to play the part of tufters, and the fox was eventually forced to take to the open; but although the pack saw him go away, not a single hound stirred until the signal was given, when they at once hit off the line and eventually killed their fox. Early in this chapter mention was made of Joseph Jones (the author of the Diary), Mr. Meynell's whipper-in. This worthy appears to have been something after the stamp of Tom Moody, and it is related that in the mornings following his festive nights there used to be

great searches after his cork leg, which he used to take off at odd times and leave anywhere.

Although Mr. Meynell bought Quorndon very soon after he took the hounds, he seems to have hunted from Langton Hall for a portion of each season, for there are several notifications to the effect that the pack would not leave until a certain date; in 1786 hounds did not start for Quorn until the middle of November.

Mr. Meynell's popularity was very great, yet some extraordinary rumours were abroad at times. Once it was reported that Mr. Meynell, his hounds, and his followers were about to desert Leicestershire altogether. That was in 1778, and then the *Leicester Journal* was authorised to state that such was not the case; but the hounds would be in Leicestershire during the months of October, November, December, and January in every year, though where they cub-hunted in September, and hunted after January, is not stated. Then another story was that the Hunt was to be discontinued after the season 1787-88, in consequence of the subscription thereto expiring, and that a few coverts only would be kept for Mr. Meynell, junior. This rumour was promptly contradicted; but it was admitted that the tide of fashion had turned towards Belvoir, and that many of those who had previously followed "the Primate of the Science" had determined to throw in their lot with Sir Carnaby Haggerstone, who was then carrying on the Hunt.

It is not generally known that Mr. Meynell interested himself greatly in the subject of rabies in dogs and hounds, and communicated to a physician the result of his experience, and it is worthy of note that Mr. Meynell declared that rabies could not be given by one dog to another otherwise than by a bite. This truism is only mentioned by way of showing that Mr. Meynell knew quite well what he was talking about, as since his time



many persons have believed that dogs can become mad—just as a human being may contract a cold—without any reasonable cause or explanation. The whole document, though some of it may possibly be out of date now, shows that Mr. Meynell had thoroughly studied his subject, and was a man of keen observation in kennel.

Mr. Thursby, the writer of "Excursions into Leicestershire," after remarking that Quorndon Hall had been the occasional residence of princes of the blood royal of France and of many of the first nobility in England, from which we may assume that they were Mr. Meynell's guests, relates that in 1786 the Duke of York accompanied the Quorn hounds to Thorpe Langton, where they found a fox, which they lost after running him through Welham, Slawson, Stokerston, and Beaumont Chase. There was of course an enormous concourse of spectators to see the duke, whose affability greatly pleased the multitude. On a subsequent occasion the Prince of Wales's horses were sent to Market Harborough, as he intended hunting with Mr. Meynell, but other business detaining him, he was unable to go to Leicestershire, to the disappointment of the county at large.

This, however, was not the first occasion on which Royalty hunted with Mr. Meynell. One Sunday night, about Christmas-time, 1766, the Duke of York sent an express to Mr. Cradock to tell him that he intended hunting next day in the neighbourhood of Gumley—presumably Mr. Meynell had announced his intention of meeting in that district. Accordingly, the Duke appeared at the covert side on the Monday, and seems to have enjoyed himself.

It has been already mentioned that when Meynell first began to hunt the Quorn country he had but two subscribers, but in 1783 it is said he had five supporters who contributed a thousand guineas each; but the

names of four only are mentioned—the Duke of Bedford, Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh, Lord Maynard, and Lord Robert Spencer. This statement, one would imagine, must be received with some caution, for, considering that upwards of four hundred horses were, it is said, brought into the neighbourhood to hunt with Mr. Meynell, it seems rather strange that five men should be willing to provide sport for so many: moreover, if five thousand guineas were forthcoming from five men, Mr. Meynell's contribution—no small one—must be added, the total making a sum out of all proportion to the requirements of the day, even if we admit that “the establishment of this hunt is upon an infinitely larger scale, and a much more expensive footing, than any other in this country.”

In this same year (1783) the Prince of Wales declared his intention of hunting with Mr. Meynell, but he does not appear to have carried out his intention. Three years later he declared he would go to Leicestershire as soon as the frost broke, and his horses set out on their journey to Leicestershire, but the frost coming on again they returned to Windsor.

By the time that the Duke of York paid his last visit to Leicestershire Mr. Meynell was near the end of his tether, and about 1797 or 1798, he, though retaining the position of master, entrusted to his son the actual management of the pack in the field. Still, it was while Mr. Meynell was nominally master of the Quorn that the famous Billesdon Coplow run took place, on Monday the 24th February 1800, and this famous gallop has been lauded in verse by the Rev. Mr. Lowth, the son of Bishop Lowth, and by many writers in prose. No complete version, however, of Mr. Lowth's poem has ever been published, as the author thought that in its original form it would be too long.

The story of the description of the Billesdon Coplow

run is as follows: Mr. Lowth being on a visit to a friend living near Melton, was offered by his host a mount on a young thoroughbred horse which, so far as the owner knew, had never seen hounds. Mr. Lowth rode the horse to the place of meeting, but had no idea of riding him through a run. On the day after this famous hunt some one suggested at dinner that the run was worthy of being commemorated in verse, and as Mr. Lowth was known to wield a ready pen, he was asked to give his own ideas of the gallop. Mr. Lowth, who was a stranger to Leicestershire (he lived in the H. H. country), had of course no prejudice to affect him. He went to his room with his head full of the stories he had heard; he sat down, and, before he turned in, had turned out a poem which has remained famous from that day to this.

I give here the usual version, to which are appended the extra stanzas, a few lines in the usual edition being given to show where the excised lines come in:—

POEM ON THE FAMOUS BILLESDEN  
COPLOW RUN

*Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,  
Et quorum pars magna fui.*

With the wind at north-east, forbiddingly keen,  
The Coplow of Billesden ne'er witnessed, I ween,  
Two hundred such horses and men at a burst,  
All determined to ride—each resolved to be first.  
But to get a good start over-eager and jealous,  
Two-thirds, at the least, of these very fine fellows  
So crowded, and hustled, and jostled, and crossed,  
That they rode the wrong way, and at starting were lost.  
In spite of th' unpromising state of the weather,  
Away broke the fox, and the hounds close together.  
A burst up to Tilton so brilliantly ran,  
Was scarce ever seen in the mem'ry of man.  
What hounds guided scent, or which led the way,  
Your bard—to their names quite a stranger—can't say;  
Though their names had he known, he's free to confess,  
His horse could not show him at such a death-pace.

Villiers, Cholmondeley, and Forester made such sharp play,  
 Not omitting Germaine, never seen till to-day :  
 Had you judged of these four by the trim of their pace,  
 At Bibury you'd thought they'd been riding a race.  
 But these hounds with a scent, how they dash and they fling,  
 To o'er-ride them is quite the impossible thing ;  
 Disdaining to hang in the wood, through he raced,  
 And the open for Skeffington gallantly faced ;  
 Where headed and foiled, his first point he forsook,  
 And merrily led them a dance o'er the brook.  
 Passed Galby and Norton, Great Stretton and Small,  
 Right onward still sweeping to old Stretton Hall ;  
 Where two minutes' check served to show at one ken  
 The extent of the havoc 'mongst horses and men.  
 Such sighing, such sobbing, such trotting, such walking ;  
 Such reeling, such halting, of fences such baulking :  
 Such a smoke in the gaps, such comparing of notes ;  
 Such quizzing each other's daubed breeches and coats :  
 Here a man walked afoot who his horse had half killed,  
 There you met with a steed who his rider had spilled :  
 In short, such dilemmas, such scrapes, such distress,  
 One fox ne'er occasioned, the knowing confess.  
 But, alas ! the dilemmas had scarcely began,  
 On for Wigston and Ayleston he resolute ran,  
 Where a few of the stoutest now slackened and panted,  
 And many were seen irretrievably planted.  
 The high road to Leicester the scoundrel then crossed,  
 As Tell-tale<sup>1</sup> and Beaufremont<sup>2</sup> found to their cost ;  
 And Villiers esteemed it a serious bore,  
 That no longer could Shuttlecock<sup>3</sup> fly as before ;  
 Even Joe Miller's<sup>4</sup> spirit of fun was so broke,  
 That he ceased to consider the run as a joke.  
 Then streaming away, o'er the river he splashed,—  
 Germaine close at hand, off the bank Melon<sup>5</sup> dashed.  
 Why so stout proved the Dun, in a scamper so wild ?  
 Till now he had only been rode by a Child.<sup>6</sup>  
 After him plunged Joe Miller with Musters so slim,  
 Who twice sank, and nearly paid dear for his whim,  
 Not reflecting that all water Melons must swim.  
 Well soused by their dip, on they brushed o'er the bottom,  
 With liquor on board, enough to besot 'em.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Forester's horse.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Maddock's horse.


<sup>3</sup> Lord Villiers's horse.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Musters's horse.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Germaine's horse.

<sup>6</sup> Formerly Mr. Child's.

But the villain no longer at all at a loss,  
 Stretched away like a d——l for Enderby Gorse :  
 Where meeting with many a brother and cousin,  
 Who knew how to dance a good hay in the furzen ;  
 Jack Raven<sup>1</sup> at length coming up on a hack,  
 That a farmer had lent him, whipped off the game pack.  
 Running sulky, old Loadstone<sup>2</sup> the stream would not swim,  
 No longer sport proving a magnet to him.  
 Of mistakes and mishaps, and what each man befell,  
 Would the muse could with justice poetical tell !  
 Bob Grosvenor on Plush<sup>3</sup>—though determined to ride—  
 Lost at first a good start, and was soon set aside ;  
 Though he charged hill and dale, not to lose this rare chase,  
 On velvet, Plush could not get a footing, alas !  
 To Tilton sailed bravely Sir Wheeler O'Cuff,  
 Where neglecting, through hurry, to keep a good luff,  
 To leeward he drifts—how provoking a case !  
 And was forced, though reluctant, to give up the chase.  
 As making his way to the pack's not his forte,  
 Sir Lawley,<sup>4</sup> as usual, lost half of the sport.  
 But then the professed philosophical creed,  
 That "all's for the best,"—of Master Candide,  
 If not comfort Sir R., reconcile may at least ;  
 For, with *this* supposition, *his* sport is the best.

Orby Hunter, who seemed to be hunting his fate,  
 Got ills, to the tune of not fewer than eight.  
 Basan's king,<sup>5</sup> upon Glimpse,<sup>6</sup> sadly out of condition,  
 Pulled up, to avoid of being tired the suspicion.  
 Og did right so to yield ; for he very soon found,  
 His worst had he done, he'd have scarce glimpsed a hound.  
 Charles Meynell, who lay very well with the hounds,  
 Till of Stretton he nearly arrived at the bounds,  
 Now discovered that Waggoner<sup>7</sup> rather would creep,  
 Than exert his great prowess in taking a leap ;  
 But when crossing the turnpike, he read  "Put on here,"  
 'Twas enough to make any one bluster and swear.  
 The Waggoner feeling familiar the road,  
 Was resolved not to quit it ; so stock still he stood.

<sup>1</sup> The name of the huntsman.

<sup>2</sup> The huntsman's horse.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Robert Grosvenor's horse.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Robert Lawley, called Sir Lawley in the Melton dialect.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Ogländer, familiarly called Og.

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Ogländer's horse.

<sup>7</sup> Mr. C. Meynell's horse.

Yet prithee, dear Charles ! why rash vows will you make,  
 Thy leave of old Billesden <sup>1</sup> to finally take ?  
 Since from Legg's Hill, <sup>2</sup> for instance, or perhaps Melton Spinney,  
 If they go a good pace, you are beat for a guinea !  
 'Tis money, they say, makes the mare to go kind ;  
 The proverb has vouched for this time out of mind ;  
 But though of this truth you admit the full force,  
 It may not hold so good of every horse.  
 If it did, Ellis Charles need not bustle and hug,  
 By name, not by nature, his favourite Slug. <sup>3</sup>  
 Yet Slug as he is—the whole of this chase  
 Charles ne'er could have seen, had he gone a snail's pace.  
 Old Gradus, <sup>4</sup> whose fretting and fuming at first  
 Disqualify strangely for such a tight burst,  
 Ere to Tilton arrived, ceased to pull and to crave,  
 And though freshish at Stretton, he stepped a *pas grave* !  
 Where, in turning him over a cramp kind of place,  
 He overturned George, whom he threw on his face ;  
 And on foot to walk home it had sure been his fate,  
 But that soon he was caught, and tied up to a gate.

Near Wigston occurred a most singular joke,  
 Captain Miller averred that his leg he had broke,—  
 And bemoaned, in most piteous expressions, how hard,  
 By so cruel a fracture, to have his sport marred.  
 In quizzing his friends he felt little remorse  
 To finesse the complete doing up of his horse.  
 Had he told a long story of losing a shoe,  
 Or of laming his horse, he very well knew  
 That the Leicestershire creed out this truism worms,  
 "Lost shoes and dead beat are synonymous terms."  
 So a horse must here learn, whatever he does,  
 'To die game—as at Tyburn—and "die in his shoes."  
 Bethel Cox, and TOM SMITH, Messieurs Bennett and Hawke,  
 Their nags all contrived to reduce to a walk.  
 Maynard's Lord, who detests competition and strife,  
 As well in the chase as in social life,  
 Than whom nobody harder has rode in his time,  
 But to crane here and there now thinks it no crime,  
 That he beat some crack riders most fairly may crow,  
 For he lived to the end, though he scarcely knows how.

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<sup>1</sup> He had threatened never to follow the hounds again from Billesden, on account of his weight.

<sup>2</sup> A different part of the hunt.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Charles Ellis's horse.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. George Ellis's horse.

With snaffle and martingale held in the rear,  
 His horse's mouth open half up to his ear ;  
 Mr. Wardle, who threatened great things overnight,<sup>1</sup>  
 Beyond Stretton was left in most terrible plight.  
 Too lean to be pressed, yet egged on by compulsion,  
 No wonder his nag tumbled into convulsion.  
 Ah ! had he but lost a fore shoe, or fell lame,  
 'Twould only his sport have curtailed, not his fame.  
 Loraine,<sup>2</sup>—than whom no one his game plays more safe,  
 Who the last to the first prefers seeing by half,—  
 What with nicking<sup>3</sup> and keeping a constant look-out,  
 Every turn of the scent surely turned to account.  
 The wonderful pluck of his horse surprised some,  
 But he knew they were making point blank for his home.  
 "Short home" to be brought we all should desire,  
 Could we manage the trick like the Enderby<sup>4</sup> squire.

Wild Shelley,<sup>5</sup> at starting all ears and all eyes,  
 Who to get a good start all experiment tries,  
 Yet contrived it so ill, as to throw out poor Gipsy,<sup>6</sup>  
 Whom he rattled along as if he'd been tipsy,  
 To catch them again ; but, though famous for speed,  
 She never could touch<sup>7</sup> them, much less get a lead,  
 So disheartened, disjointed, and beat, home he swings,  
 Not much unlike a fiddler hung upon strings.

An H. H.<sup>8</sup> who in Leicestershire never had been,  
 So of course such a tickler ne'er could have seen,  
 Just to see them throw off, on a raw horse was mounted,  
 Who a hound had ne'er seen, nor a fence had confronted.  
 But they found in such style, and went off at such score,  
 That he could not resist the attempt to see more :  
 So with scrambling, and dashing, and one rattling fall,  
 He saw all the fun, up to Stretton's white Hall.  
 There they anchored, in plight not a little distressing—  
 The horse being raw, he of course got a dressing.  
 That wonderful mare of Vanneck's, who till now  
 By no chance ever tired, was taken in tow :

<sup>1</sup> Said to have threatened that he would beat the whole field.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Loraine Smith.

<sup>3</sup> A term of reproach.

<sup>4</sup> Where Mr. Loraine Smith lives.

<sup>5</sup> Usually very grave.

<sup>6</sup> Sir John Shelley's mare.

<sup>7</sup> Melton dialect for "overtake."

<sup>8</sup> These initials may serve either for Hampshire hog or Hampshire Hunt.

And what's worse, she gave Van such a devilish jog  
 In the face with her head, plunging out of a bog,  
 That with eye black as ink, or as Edward's famed Prince,  
 Half blind has he been, and quite deaf ever since.  
 But let that not mortify thee, Shacabac ;<sup>1</sup>  
 She only was blown, and came home a rare hack.

There Craven too stopped, whose misfortune, not fault,  
 His mare unaccountably vexed with string-halt ;  
 And when she had ceased thus spasmodic to prance,  
 Her mouth 'gan to twitch with St. Vitus's dance.  
 But how shall described be the fate of Rose Price,  
 Whose fav'rite white gelding conveyed him so nice  
 Through thick and through thin, that he vowed and protested<sup>2</sup>  
 No money should part them, as long as life lasted ?  
 But the pace that effected which money could not :  
 For to part, and in death, was their no distant lot.  
 In a fatal blind ditch Carlo Khan's<sup>3</sup> powers failed,  
 Where nor lancet nor laudanum either availed.  
 More care of a horse than he took, could take no man :  
 He'd more straw than would serve any lying-in woman.  
 Still he died !—yet just how, as nobody knows,  
 It may truly be said, he died “under the Rose.”  
 At the death of poor Khan, Melton feels such remorse,  
 That they've christened that ditch, “The Vale of White Horse.”

Thus ended a chase, which for distance and speed  
 Its fellow we never have heard of or read.  
 Every species of ground ev'ry horse does not suit,  
 What's a good country hunter may here prove a brute ;  
 And, unless for all sorts of strange fences prepared,  
 A man and his horse are sure to be scared.  
 This variety gives constant life to the chase ;  
 But as Forester says—“Sir, what KILLS, is the PACE.”  
 In most other countries they boast of their breed,  
 For carrying, at times, such a beautiful head ;  
 But these hounds to carry a head cannot fail,  
 And constantly too, for,—by George,—there's no tail.  
 Talk of horses, and hounds, and the system of kennel,  
 Give me Leicestershire nags, and the hounds of Old Meynell !

<sup>1</sup> A name taken from Blue Beard, and given to Mr. Vanneck by his Melton friends.

<sup>2</sup> At the covert side a large sum was offered for it.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Price's horse.



## EXTRA STANZAS

But these hounds with a scent, how they dash and they fling ;  
 To o'er-ride them is quite the impossible thing.  
 At starting, descending that desperate vale,  
 'Stead of skirting the hill, to fall could not fail.  
 E'en regaining with Loadstone and Raven that hill,  
 Was enough many country good horses to kill.  
 Arrived at the top, and fast gulping for breath  
 To avoid the mad staggers, or perhaps sudden death,  
 To fall in with the hill nags when we could scarce creep,  
 As they poured from around the amphitheatre's sweep,  
 Slap-dash, seeming cloud-dropped, at three quarters speed,  
 None of us could then compass e'en those thoroughbred ;  
 Or from stage scenes behind, being all in the secret,  
 By the trap-door from Coplow to Tilton to migrate.  
 A rencounter so sudden, it put me in mind  
 Of a flight of young pigeons, when right 'fore the wind,  
 Or the whiz of an arrow shot out of a bow ;  
 Now by them and their pace to be taken in tow  
 Were enough to have shook stouter nerves than were mine,  
 And disordered for ever the stout Palatine.<sup>1</sup>  
 While we sloped and were ploughing much deeper than hoof  
 On the hill every Pegasus kept them aloof ;  
 Had they all been with us in the valley beneath  
 They avoided so wise as the valley of death—  
 With the hounds their ascension, I shrewdly suspect  
 Would have proved most remarkably choice and select ;  
 If many, indeed, perhaps famed on the flat  
 Had not ended their sport there, or haply though late,  
 They had managed to reach the steep height, their dim eye  
 Might have viewed, not the hounds, but their fate only nigh.

A few there were who had ridden the line yard for  
 yard with the hounds, and when they reached Tilton  
 with their horses in a lather and pretty well blown,  
 they must have been rather angry at finding so many  
 of the field cantering up with their horses not at all  
 distressed, since they had come by the road. At this  
 stage, however, the victory of the point rider and skirter

<sup>1</sup> The horse on which Mr. Lowth was mounted.

would appear to have come to an end, for the fox, instead of making what was supposed to be his original point—over Tilton Hill—was headed and turned short to the right, facing the open country towards Skeffington. At this point both thrusters and skirterers were together, and the struggle for supremacy began. The line lay over a splendid line, for Mr. Lowth in one of his unpublished notes says—

But one field we rode that was not laid in grass. The fox, on leaving Skeffington, took a line bearing still more to the right by Gadby, but, unwilling to face the wind, gave up his original point and turned south, and then going west, ran down wind to Enderby.

In this part of the run it was that Mr. Lowth described in the original MS. his “one rattling fall” :—

As the pace, now old Marplot or Magic maintain,  
 So now Villiers, now Forester, Cholmondeley, Germaine,  
 Take the lead in their turn 'mong the Nimrods, as each  
 By speed, by quick eye, and by nerve the pack reach.  
 On these guides any stranger may safely depend  
 If he's duly prepared to meet his last end.  
 Not on things on the earth is concentrated their love,  
 Their affections are set upon things far above.  
 Even Herschel himself, with much wonder would stare  
 To see these bright meteors skim through the air,  
 So Villiers, who during the speediest course,  
 Ever picks with decision choice ground for his horse ;  
 A stranger, who marked how direct was his line  
 To him straight determined his faith to confine ;  
 But scarce had resolved on this laudable plan  
 Ere the musical pack with such eagerness ran  
 Down a seeming small gulley, which spreading, was seen  
 To become a wide track two steep hills between.  
 About midway this chine, as the fleet pack divide,  
 We hoped that the scent would have lain on our side,  
 When, as ill-luck would have it (could fortune do worse ?)  
 The scent soon turned out to be just the reverse.  
 My guide thus thrown out, down the precipice swept,  
 Charged the rail and the brook, through the sedge as it crept.

Close behind poor Pilgarlic<sup>1</sup> in charging the same  
 Cleared the rail and the gulf, but alas! headlong came  
 Horse and all, for the novice unpractised to land,  
 From want of Exertion, was sadly trepanned;  
 Though to make as amends for this trifling *faux pas*  
 (A completer capsize no man living e'er saw)  
 On the brow of the hill, where the grass lay but thin,  
 A most opportune half-minute's check let us in.  
 Let that poet be therefore no longer believed  
 Who averred that "one false step can ne'er be retrieved."  
 Yet, had he been pressed,<sup>2</sup> perhaps again he'd have come,  
 Since he gallantly faced two-and-twenty miles home.  
 How he met with fair play, there's no reason to doubt.  
 But the whole of this trimmer he'd fairly seen out:  
 For to covert being fanned, as a hackney apace,  
 He directly supplied, too, a hunter's hard place.

This horse Palatine must have been an exceedingly good one; but though raw and unfit, as was supposed, he must have been kept in some condition by being hacked about. Blood will tell, they say, and it was so in this case; moreover, he was ridden by a superlative feather-weight horseman.

About a couple of hundred started from the Coplow, on their second horses, of course, for the first horses had been sent home before the Coplow fox was found at two o'clock. This fox ran about twenty-eight miles, and eventually beat both hounds and horses.

On giving up actual management of the hounds Mr. Meynell built himself a cottage near the kennels, with a passage running into them from his house; and in 1800 he sold his hounds and Quorndon Hall to Lord Sefton, who succeeded him, and for five years maintained the Quorn hounds in princely fashion. Mr. Meynell continued to go out with Lord Sefton, as mentioned by "Nimrod," and after he had parted with his hounds it was found that his correctness of ear was by no means impaired by his advancing years. While a small covert

<sup>1</sup> The author.

<sup>2</sup> The author's horse.

was being drawn a hound spoke, and Lord Sefton, riding up to Mr. Meynell, asked him what hound had spoken. "I think it was Concord," replied the old master. "No," objected Lord Sefton, "Concord was at my heels all the time." "I am pretty sure that it was either Concord or Caroline" (brother and sister), rejoined Mr. Meynell.

Soon afterwards Jack Raven, the huntsman, came cantering by with the main body of the pack. "What hound was that which spoke?" asked Lord Sefton. "Concord, my Lord," was the answer, and so the point was settled.

During the middle and later years of Mr. Meynell's mastership there often appeared in the field Mr. (afterwards Captain) Charles Combers, who was born at Brentwood somewhere about the year 1752. He was entered to hounds when only about nine years of age, and when he reached man's estate was known as "The Flying Cucumber," from the manner in which he put his horses along. After leaving the university (Oxford, I think) he joined the 11th Dragoons; ran through his money, and was ultimately appointed captain commandant of an advance corps in Ireland about 1796.

When "The Flying Cucumber" was in full feather he gravitated towards Leicestershire, taking with him two good hunters and a hack—not much of a stud as we should think now—having about a hundred pounds in his pocket. On the very first day he met the hounds he went as straight as a dart, and among those whom he pounded was Lord Maynard, who, addressing him, said, "Combers, I should like to buy your nag; I gave £300 for mine, but yours is a better jumper." The bargain was eventually closed by Lord Maynard giving his horse and £50 in exchange for Combers's hunter, and a few days later Comber rode the new horse field for field with the hounds. The experience of this run

served to show Lord Maynard that, after all, his original three hundred guinea horse was the better of the two, and eventually the horses were exchanged again, Combers drawing another £50. It would appear that in the course of the season he had several more remunerative sales and barterings, and when he left Leicestershire it was with £800 in his pocket.

Harvey's Sauce is a very well known condiment to-day, and it is to "The Flying Cucumber" that we owe it. On one occasion when on his way to Leicestershire he stopped, as was his wont, at Bedford to dine at the George, then kept by a man named Harvey, where he ordered a steak, and when it was served, Combers requested Harvey to let his servant bring from his buggy a quart bottle which contained an admirable sauce. Having poured some of it into his plate and mixed it with the gravy of the steak, he asked Harvey to taste it, and the host pronounced it to be a most excellent relish. "Well, Mr. Harvey," said Combers, "I shall leave the bottle with you, to use till my return, only be careful to reserve enough for me." On the next day Harvey had to provide a wedding dinner, and introduced the sauce, which afforded such general satisfaction that several smaller parties were made up, and the contents of the bottle were soon exhausted.

In due course Captain Combers returned, and having been told that no more sauce remained, said, "Never mind, I can make some more from my mother's recipe; and, by-the-bye, I will give you a copy of it." He was as good as his word. Harvey made it in large quantities; sent it to the different shops in London; advertised it as "Harvey's Sauce," and by its extensive sale realised a large income. He subsequently sold the recipe for an annuity of £400 or £500 a year, which he received for the remainder of his life. Such at least is the story.

Mr. Meynell, while popular with his subscribers, was

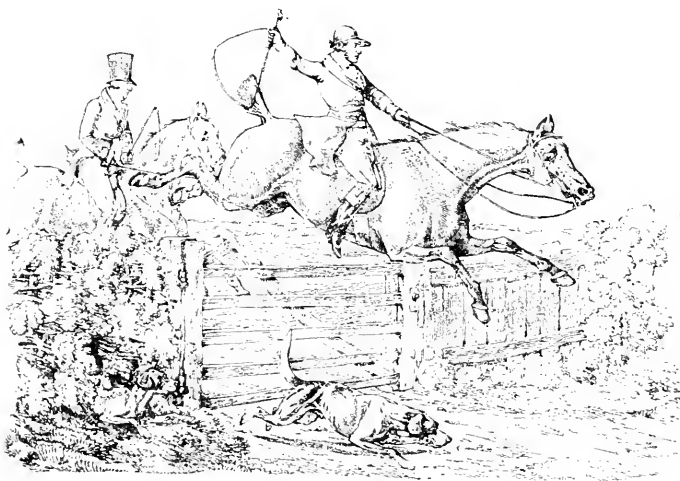
held in high esteem by the farmers and cattle-dealers, whose interests he ever consulted. Punctuality at the covert side was not the least of his virtues, but on one occasion seeing a horse ridden by a lad, and knowing who the owner was, he pulled out his watch at the time when the hounds should have moved off, and said, "I see Jack So-and-so's horse here, and he has not come. It is Leicester Fair this morning; he is a good fellow, and we will give him a quarter of an hour's law!" The Jack in question was a sporting grazier who was attending the fair on business, but the cattle-market was held early in the morning, and many a sporting farmer, who could afford to keep a hunter in those days, did his business first and then came on to hunt afterwards. "Few masters of hounds," wrote a chronicler of the time, "bear this in mind: this is the way to preserve a country."

Towards the close of Mr. Meynell's career Messrs. Cholmondeley, Forester, and Ralph Lambton were among the hardest men of the hunt, and Mr. R. Lambton it was who succeeded his brother and Mr. Baker in the mastership of the Lambton hounds.

It is supposed that Mr. Meynell's last appearance at the covert side was at Gumley in January 1798, after which date his son took command, though Mr. Meynell still remained actual master. Mr. Meynell, junr., however, died in the year 1800, from the effects of a fall from his horse.

Mr. Meynell lived on until the 14th of December 1808, when he died in London, at his house in Chapel Street, Mayfair, at the age of seventy-three, as some say; but the *Sporting Magazine* and the *Leicester Journal* give his age at the time of his death as eighty-one, in which case he would have been born in 1727, and this is the more probable story of the two, as one can hardly imagine that he would have been a master

of the hounds and married before he attained the age of nineteen years. Mr. Meynell was buried in the family vault at Bradley in Derbyshire, and thus ended the life of a master of foxhounds whose name will never pass out of memory as long as fox-hunting continues to be one of the chief of English sports.







## CHAPTER III

LORD SEFTON (1800-1805)

LORD FOLEY (1805-1806)

MR. ASSHETON SMITH (1806-1817)



## CHAPTER III

### LORD SEFTON

1800—1805

“LORD SEFTON will take my hounds at the end of the season, and I know he hopes to succeed me in hunting the country.” So runs a letter, dated the 19th March 1800, from Mr. Meynell to the Duke of Rutland. The second Earl of Sefton was as good as his word. He bought Mr. Meynell’s hounds *en masse*, and added to them his own, with which he had been hunting a part of Oxfordshire. Tom Wingfield and the kennel-man were sent to bring them to Quorn, from Combe Abbey, and on the return journey the cavalcade passed through Leicester on the Good Friday of 1800, just as the people were going to church, whereupon Tom Wingfield remarked to his colleague, “Jack, we shouldn’t be here,” Tom no doubt feeling that they were creating something of a scandal, and probably setting some people against fox-hunting. However, they reached Quorn safely, and when the two packs were united the kennels were full indeed.

When Lord Sefton took over Mr. Meynell’s hounds he retained Jack Raven, the huntsman, as well. Raven, though getting on in years, was still efficient; while the new master, whose hounds had been hunted by old Stephen Goodall, did not care to discharge his old huntsman, who had served him well and faithfully, so, as he had so many hounds—rather over a hundred couples

—he determined on the bold experiment of having two packs and two huntsmen. With two Kings of Brentford in the field, many disagreements, the outcome of jealousy, might have been anticipated; but it speaks well for master and men that nothing of the kind occurred, and everything went on as smoothly as possible. The arrangement was that Raven should be head-man, the chief in kennel, and should hunt the old pack on two days in the week in the best part of the Quorn country, the younger hounds hunting, under Goodall, the woodlands on the other two days. One cannot help praising Goodall for his willingness to play second fiddle, but the arrangement was the only possible way out of a difficulty. The two huntsmen were about as much unlike as two men could be. “Nature had interdicted superior horsemanship to Goodall,” wrote “Nimrod,” “for although she had given him his full share of brains, she formed him with a great carcass upon short legs (very good qualities in a horse) and an aptitude to feed (still better in a hog) that would not be satisfied until the maximum exceeded twenty stone.” With a frame which must have much resembled, if it did not exceed, that of Charles (Bob) Ward of the Hertfordshire, Stephen Goodall was not built to shine over the more stiffly fenced portions of Leicestershire, even as the country then was; but like many another heavy man (when his nerves are in the right place) Goodall would, to use a phrase of Whyte-Melville’s, “smuggle” himself and his horse over a country in surprising fashion.

Jack Raven, on the other hand, was moulded more on the lines of James Pigg (though no one would think so after looking at the picture of him in which he and the hound Glider are represented in Mr. Meynell’s plainly furnished sitting-room): he was tall and wiry and had a fine melodious voice, whereas Stephen Goodall is reported to have been very weak in the throat.

Neither huntsman appears to have been very free with the horn, as one follower of the Quorn says that he only remembers to have heard it once in four days, and that was when a hound was lost. He was, however, a master of hound-lore and hunting. So, too, was Raven, and several stories testifying to his knowledge of hunting are extant. On one occasion a famous hound called Guzman was running a hare, the hound being on one side of a hedge and the hare on the other. A whipper-in galloped on to stop Guzman, when Raven called to him, "Let him alone; he will stop of his own accord when he sees what he is running." And so he did.

Jack Raven's death is nowhere mentioned, so far as I have been able to discover; but on very good authority I learn that he was drowned in the river Soar, not far from the kennels, while returning home after "a pipe and a glass." It is supposed that he slipped off the bank.

The establishment of Mr. Meynell, though framed on the lines of efficiency and governed by a master hand, does not appear to have excelled what may be termed a strictly workmanlike standard; but Lord Sefton carried on the Hunt with great magnificence. He was at his prime when he succeeded to the country; he smartened up the men and their livery; put them on much better horses, while the master himself, a welter weight, rode the best hunters that money could buy. For Rowland, Plato, and Gooseberry he gave well on for a thousand pounds each, while to Mr. Loraine Smith he offered eight hundred pounds for his famous Hollyhock horse. Unfortunately for the "long Squire of Enderby Hall" the offer was refused, as the horse died not long afterwards during a run, from the rupture of a blood-vessel. The prices of good hunters, however, ruled high in those days, as in 1802 two horses, the

property of a Leicestershire gentleman, were sold, one for 750 guineas, the other for 650 guineas.

Heavy weight though he was, Lord Sefton was a capital hand at getting over a country; he was a rare hand at galloping between his fences, and had the knack of making up lost ground, while he took the fullest advantage of every turn of the hounds. Like a later master, Mr. Osbaldeston, he very much disliked timber; but if he occasionally shirked a stiff rail, he turned away from nothing else; and his weight, which eventually caused him to give up fox-hunting altogether, enabled him to bore his way through the thickest blackthorn fences in his country.

Mr. Edward Goulbourn, the author of "The Epwell Hunt; or, Black Collars in the Rear," written somewhere about the year 1807, wrote a burlesque description of a run he saw in Leicestershire, but which was never published, and he makes mention of Lord Sefton in these words:—

Earl Sefton came next, and for beef on the rib  
 No Leicestershire bullock was rounder:  
 A wonderful weight at a wonderful rate,  
 He flew like a twenty-four pounder.

In all departments the Hunt was most ably administered, for Lord Sefton was an admirable man of business, seeing himself to the details of kennel and stable, much as Mr. Meynell had done. Unlike some of his successors, he did not land himself in difficulties by over expenditure and extravagance. He was a fine coachman, kept a fine stable of coach horses, and his drag or landau<sup>1</sup> was often seen at the covert side. In

<sup>1</sup> Amateurs who kept their own conveyances drove four horses in a kind of barouche more often than in a coach. In the sixties an old gentleman whose name was, I think, Box, and who lived at Cookham, used to drive four horses from the box of a landau.

London, too, one of his equipages created no little sensation in St. James's Park by the Horse Guards. The vehicle, in which were the ladies Molineaux, is described as having resembled two large chaises fastened together, one behind the other, the shafts being removed from the second chaise. The two bodies were on four wheels, and behind the united chaises there was a species of dickey for the groom. This made three departments for passengers; with the groom there were eight persons, and a pair of horses drew the vehicle. After giving up the hounds Lord Sefton hunted for a few years, and later on we read of him in the Greville Memoirs.

“Five new peerages came out yesterday,” wrote the Clerk of the Council on the 15th June 1831, “Sefton, Kinnaird, Fingall, Leitrim, and Agar Ellis.” Mr. Greville, who went to Goodwood for the races and was kept there by an attack of gout after every one else had left, was not perhaps in a very good humour when he wrote on the 20th August, after his arrival in town:—

Sefton has just been here, who talks blusteringly of the peers that are to be made, no matter at what cost of character to the House of Lords, anything rather than be beaten; but I am not sure that he *knows* anything. In such matters as these he is (however sharp) no better than a fool—no knowledge, no information, no reflection or combination; prejudices, partialities, and sneers are what his political wisdom consists of; but he is Lord Grey's *âme damnée*.

To return to hunting, however, the stables at Quorn were a sight to behold, and at sunset a patent lamp, shedding what in those days was considered a great amount of light, was suspended at every fourth stall.

“Cork-legged Jones” having died just before Mr. Meynell gave up the hounds, Joe Harrison, who succeeded him, and Tom Wingfield were Lord Sefton's whippers-

in. Both of them were good men, and both eventually became huntsmen, Tom Wingfield becoming very famous, one-eyed man though he was; but it was said of him that he could see more with his one eye than most men could with two. His partial loss of sight certainly did not affect his riding, for a bolder man never crossed a horse. One day, on seeing a follower of Lord Sefton's hounds decline a big fence, he half turned round in his saddle and remarked to some one who was following, "I'm thinking, sir, that that there gentleman has no business in our shire."

One of the critics of the time declared that Lord Sefton cared but little for hounds, but made much of the standard of men and horses. To a certain extent this may be true. He certainly was not the hound man Mr. Meynell was, but that gentleman was always ready with advice and assistance, and to him the new master owed a good deal. On the other hand, Lord Sefton could have been by no means indifferent to the kennel, for when he said, as a reason for giving up the hounds, that he could not find horses to carry him as fast as he wished to go, people said that it was a judgment upon him for having bred his hounds so fast, though how he could have made so great an alteration in the pace of his pack in five seasons is not clear; for Mr. Meynell's were by no means slow hounds; nor were Mr. John Warde's. However, there is the story.

In March 1805 Lord Sefton's hounds enjoyed a good run under somewhat singular circumstances.

A certain fox was reported to have made many depredations upon the poultry of Mr. Stone of Barrow, and him Lord Sefton eventually killed with five couples of hounds only. We find only two instances of a few couples of hounds being used as the Devon and Somerset staghounds employ tufters; but whether these five couples were so used, or whether they went away with the fox, leaving the main body in the lurch, one cannot discover. At any



rate the fox was in a few minutes found in a hedgerow on Mr. Stone's farm, and went away in view of the hounds, which, for about half-an-hour, ran very fast indeed. The fox at last obtained a start, and for a couple of hours the pace fortunately moderated considerably. The little pack worked wonderfully well up to Thrussington, where they hunted the fox in and out of a number of yards and gardens, coming up to him in one of the latter. A second time he went away in view of the hounds, but then they gave him no rest, killing him after a three hours' hunt near Brooksby Earths. Report says that the only three horsemen up at the finish were Mr. Stone, Goodall, who was hunting the hounds, and Jack Raven, who was perhaps out for a holiday.

To Lord Sefton has been ascribed the invention of second horses in the field, an arrangement which in later times has been the cause of much grumbling, and, as in the Quorn and some other hunts, of special regulations being promulgated by the respective masters. Lord Sefton may perhaps have made some alteration in the use of them, but men rode more than one horse a day nearly three centuries before he became an M.F.H. Henry VIII., a welter weight, worthy to rank with Lord Sefton himself, once got to the bottom of eight horses in a single day, while in the account of a run with the Charlton (afterwards the Goodwood) hounds in 1738, contributed by Mr. T. J. Bennett to vol. xv. of the "Sussex Archæological Collection," we read that

Lord Harcourt blew his first horse, and that his second subsequently felt the effects of long legs and a sudden steep . . . while in Goodwood Park, the Duke of Richmond chose to send three lame horses back to Charlton, and took Saucy Face and Sir William that were luckily at Goodwood.

There is nothing new under the sun, they say. Lord Sefton's method of employing a second horse, however, was in direct opposition to the course adopted by Lord Lonsdale, who ordained that all second horsemen, to

whom his own second horsemen act as pilots, should keep to the roads and bridle paths. Lord Sefton had a light groom in livery, and he and George Raven, John's nephew, dressed as a whipper-in, rode his spare horses, for he always had three out, not to points as is the present fashion, but in his wake, and he changed from one to the other as occasion required, which appears to have been about every fifteen or twenty minutes, though on one occasion one of his best horses, Loadstar, carried his owner for an hour and five minutes. John Leech, it may be remembered, made merry over the different styles in which second horses were ridden in his time.

In November 1802 it was stated that the Quorn had experienced little more than a succession of blank days, there being but few foxes in the country. Some people attributed the prevailing state of things to the severe winter of 1801-2 having killed so many gorse coverts, while others accounted for it by acknowledging that "an unfortunate misunderstanding" existed between the Hunt and the farmers, who, following a course adopted in other parts of England in consequence of the Game Acts, decided to kill foxes. In spite of a contradiction of the above statements, there appears to be no doubt that foxes were few and far between, as when the season 1802-3 was near its close the Leicestershire men confessed that they were disappointed with the season's results. The turned-out foxes would not run, and they were, wrote a critic, "but a bad substitute for those gallant foxes which, when old Meynell managed the hounds (whose courteous and conciliatory manners prevailed on the farmers to preserve the game), showed such straightforward runs and short bursts." Moreover, several of those who had for some time hunted with the Quorn now stopped away, in the hope of finding some more favoured locality, among the absentees being Lord Maynard, Lord C. Somerset, Sir H. Featherstonhaugh, and

Mr. Charles Wyndham. Others, however, declared that the sport had been up to the average, and that the farmers and members of the Hunt had never been on more amicable terms; so which story is the true one, it is impossible to say. Nevertheless rents did not fall, for small houses were let at £200 a year, and the accommodation was meagre in the extreme in many cases.

Among the shining lights of Leicestershire about this time was Lord Villiers (afterwards the fifth Earl of Jersey). He was born in 1773,<sup>1</sup> and before he reached his majority knew his way over Leicestershire pretty well, consequently he hunted in the time of Mr. Meynell. Lord Jersey enjoyed the reputation of being one of the hardest, boldest, most judicious and elegant horsemen that ever crossed Leicestershire or any other county. But he rode grand horses, up to much more than his weight, and he was probably the only man who ever rode a Derby winner as a hunter. This was the Duke of Grafton's Tyrant, by Pot-8-o's, the winner of the Derby in 1802. He was a strong, short-legged horse of great stoutness, but he won no race after the Derby, and, as he proved utterly useless at the stud, Lord Jersey, taken by his make and shape, bought him for a hunter, and a capital bargain he turned out, for he took to jumping in the kindest manner possible, and on one occasion, after an excellent run from Shipton, his lordship declared that he believed Tyrant had jumped as high as the ceiling. Besides this Derby winner, however, Lord Jersey had many other good horses, and perhaps his favourite hunter was a chestnut horse named Cecil, which he rode for several, if not many, seasons without getting a fall. He was not only ridden in a snaffle bridle, but was a snaffle-bridle horse—the two are not synonymous, as a high authority has pointed out—

<sup>1</sup> He died on the 3rd October 1859.

and he once carried his owner in a memorable run with the Burton, when Mr. Osbaldeston hunted the country. The pair beat everybody else, and Cecil, at the finish, jumped a big stile with a ditch on the taking off side, landing in the field in which the hounds pulled down the fox. Harrington was another snaffle-bridle horse, and he stood high both in stature—seventeen hands—and in his owner's estimation, while Shuttlecock was another horse bad to beat.

Among other foremost riders of Lord Sefton's time were Sir Stephen Glynn, Mr. Assheton Smith (occasionally), the Hon. Berkeley Craven, the Hon. John Vanneck (afterwards Lord Huntingfield), Mr. Hawkes, Col. Mellish, Mr. Charles Meynell, and Col. Forester.

Although, owing to his weight, he could not participate in any other branch of the chase than otter-hunting, casual mention should be made of Daniel Lambert, who at the time of his death, in 1809, weighed just over fifty-two stone. His father had been gamekeeper to Lord Stamford, and Daniel himself was master of the Leicester gaol, where he acquired a great reputation for humanity and benevolence. He gave up the post in 1805, a few years after the death of his father. Daniel Lambert had the most intimate acquaintance with the *Racing Calendar*, and was a great breeder of game-cocks and dogs. After his death his dogs were sold at Tattersall's. Some setters realised 41 guineas, 26 guineas, 22 guineas, 32 guineas, 22 guineas, and 20 guineas, the total being 218 guineas.

Soon after Lord Sefton took the Quorn hounds, the fame of the Hunt had reached France, where it was spoken of with respect, and Mr. Meynell's name was always connected with it. A few Parisian sportsmen announced their intention of visiting Leicestershire during the season 1802-3, and when Tom Wingfield heard of it, he is said to have remarked that Lord Sefton

would show his visitors plenty of hospitality at Quorn, but would turn his back upon them in the field and leave them far behind. Whatever may have been the quality of the sport during Lord Sefton's early seasons (it is more than probable that it was a good deal better than some of the grumblers tried to make out), it was at any rate of a satisfactory nature during Lord Sefton's last season, 1804-5), for runs came thick and fast, especially in the forest and in the Six Hills district.

Towards the close of 1804 Lord Sefton, to the general regret, announced his intention of giving up the country, offering at the same time his hounds and horses, together with a liberal subscription (to which it was understood the usual followers of the Hunt would contribute) to Mr. Loraine Smith, if he would become master, and the general opinion is said to have been that Mr. Loraine Smith was the only man in the country who would be equal to the task of carrying on so great an undertaking. This statement, which is made in the *Sporting Magazine* for March 1804, does not, however, square with a letter written by Lord Sefton, dated Grosvenor Square, April 14, 1804. The letter in question, which is quoted in Mr. J. Cradock's "Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs," states: "I beg leave to inform you that Lord Foley having now a share with me in the hounds, we shall in future have to return our joint thanks for those indulgences which we cannot help hoping the Hunt will continue to receive from you." As Lord Foley therefore had a share in the hounds as early as the spring of 1804, it is not easy to understand why Lord Sefton should have offered hounds and horses to Mr. Loraine Smith, especially as he was succeeded by Lord Foley in 1805, and it was said that Sir Henry Peyton "had a wheel" in the Quorn coach, though his name never appeared.

## LORD FOLEY

1805-1806

THE new master bought Quorndon from his predecessor, and, it is to be assumed, Lord Sefton's share in the hounds and the hunt horses. Lord Foley, who had been a friend and follower of Mr. Meynell, hunted with the Quorn during Lord Sefton's mastership, and so knew the country and the people. While hunting with Lord Harborough's hounds in 1801 he had a very bad fall. His horse's hind legs dropped into a hole and he fell back on his rider, who was rendered insensible, and was so much injured that he could not be moved to Stapleford Park, Lord Harborough's residence, but had to remain at a farm-house. He managed, however, to journey to Witley Court by the 21st of December, on which day he came of age. Lord Foley was the third of his line, and came of a family possessed of a fondness for hunting, his father having hunted a portion of Worcestershire and a small slice of Oxfordshire until 1776, in which year he sold his hounds to the fourth Lord Fitzwilliam, when he started the Milton pack. Lord Sefton's successor, though he mounted his men very well, does not appear to have been much of a hound man, but as he did not have the pack quite two seasons, not a great deal of harm could have been done. He was a brilliant horseman, and being really fond of hunting, would no doubt in time have learned the lesson of experience, and eventually have blossomed into a very good M.F.H. He had several qualifications which go to the making of

a successful master ; he was, as already mentioned, bold over a country ; he had engaging manners, and was courteous to, and popular with, every one. The fixtures, even from the time of Mr. Meynell, were advertised in somewhat casual fashion. During some seasons they were notified with tolerable regularity, and then perhaps a season or two would pass with hardly an announcement. In Lord Foley's time, however, hunting men in general expressed a wish that the appointments of all the packs should be made public, and the *Leicester Journal*, among other papers, invited those who were acquainted with the fixtures to send them to the office.

Unluckily for the Quorn, Lord Foley "flirted with the elephant's tooth," as dicing was called at that time, while he was also the racing confederate of the notoriously extravagant Colonel Mellish, to whom it was said the Prince of Wales offered to grant perpetual leave from the 10th Hussars lest he should lead the younger officers of that regiment into imitating his lavishness. Mr. Raikes, who for something like a quarter of a century lived upon terms of great intimacy with Lord Foley, has left it on record in his journal that the latter was a somewhat important person on the turf, and writing of the days when the Prince of Wales patronised Brighton and attended the races there and at Lewes, gives a vivid description of the scene on the Steyne, where the morning betting took place, and where Lord Foley and Colonel Mellish were conspicuous characters.

Dicing, racing, profuse hospitality, and the mastery of the Quorn hounds, however, caused money to vanish quickly, and for one reason and another Lord Foley gave up the country late in 1806,<sup>1</sup> after having

<sup>1</sup> Much of the trouble of ascertaining dates arises from the fact of the papers being in the habit of using the names of past masters. The Quorn were called "Meynell's" hounds after Lord Sefton took them, and then, in a local paper dated 23rd January 1827, we read that Lord Foley's hounds met at Oadby Toll-bar on the 20th. In the very next sentence Mr. Assheton Smith is spoken of as the master.

showed tolerably good sport during the previous season. Being thus more free to follow his own bent, he went in more for racing. Lord Foley died on the morning of the 16th April 1833, after a few days' illness. In his journal Mr. Raikes says the kindest possible things of his deceased friend, whose wife was sister to the Duke of Leinster, and by whom he had eight children. The Worcestershire property, including Witley Court, was sold for £890,000, that being the sole means by which his eldest son, who was most anxious to pay off his father's racing and other debts, could secure a modest income. The purchasers, it is hardly necessary to state, were the trustees of Lord Dudley's will on behalf of Lord Ward, then a minor, who succeeded to Lord Dudley's enormous wealth.



## MR. ASSHETON SMITH

### MR. ASSHETON SMITH

1806-1817

FROM 1806, in which year Mr. Assheton Smith took the Quorn, down to 1827, when Mr. Osbaldeston brought to a close his second period of mastership, the Quorn country was in the hands of the above-named two masters, and also for a couple of seasons in those of Sir Bellingham Graham, who came between Mr. Osbaldeston's two reigns. The Life of Mr. Assheton Smith having gone through several editions (it takes in all that "The Druid" wrote about him), it is assumed that every one having an interest in, or knowledge of, the Quorn country is familiar with its pages, so it is not proposed to reproduce more of what has been written than is necessary to carry on the story of the Hunt, and there is not very much to be said about this famous fox-hunter beyond what has already appeared in print; but a few incidents and anecdotes which do not form part of the book have been collected. The Life of Mr. Smith (all, or nearly all, of it appeared in the columns of the *Field* newspaper in 1855) includes, in addition to what Dick Christian told "The Druid," copious extracts from "Nimrod's" "Hunting Tours" and "Hunting Reminiscences."

Although no biography of Mr. Osbaldeston has appeared in book form, so much has been written about him that his career as master of the Quorn has here been dealt with at less length than would otherwise have been the case. With these preliminary remarks, the thread of the story may be resumed.

After Lord Foley had presided for but a single season over the fortunes of the Quorn Hunt, he was succeeded by Mr. Assheton Smith in 1806. He had occasionally made Leicestershire his headquarters, and hunted in the county, for he was in the famous Billesdon Coplow run of 1800, and is favourably mentioned in Mr. Lowth's verse, as well as in one or two other songs which the run suggested. Mr. Smith was just thirty years of age when he became master of the Quorn, having been born in Queen Anne Street, London, in 1776. Though, as mentioned just now, he hunted with the Quorn, he was evidently not well known to the followers of that pack at large, for on one occasion, when out with them, he was seen riding a refusing horse several times at a flight of high rails, and people asked one another who this determined horseman might be? Little did they think that in the rider of this refuser they saw the redoubtable Tom Smith, their future master. Mr. Smith was undoubtedly a fine and bold horseman, but he could not work miracles on horseback any more than could any one else. "Nimrod" tells a story of how when galloping over a field, and looking behind him to see how his hounds were coming, his horse galloped into a pond rather than turn a foot out of the straight course. In making Mr. Smith out a great horseman, his eulogists strike one as having rather overdone it. For example, in Sir John Eardley Wilmot's "Life of Mr. Smith" it is stated that after a long run with the Tedworth the Squire, who had to leave his beaten horse at an inn, borrowed a Shetland pony to carry him home, and, says his biographer, "his masterly hand persuaded the little animal to carry him to his own door within the hour, the distance being a dozen miles, good measure." The hand may have been "masterly," but to ride a Shetland pony twelve miles in an hour is trying him tolerably high, and no amount of "hands" can get over the fact. Then,

again, it is said in Mr. Smith's Life that every horse, whatever his nature, became a hunter as soon as Mr. Smith was on his back. That this was not so is clear from the fact that the horse above mentioned refused with his owner on the occasion referred to, and the fact of the refusing is put forward by way of emphasising the rider's determination. Then, again, there was Fire King, "as unmanageable a savage as ever wore a bridle." Nevertheless, a Mr. Denham managed to hold his own on him ; and eventually he became Mr. Smith's, and the same biographer who writes that Mr. Smith could make every horse into a hunter admits that *le grand chasseur* sent him home on hunting days seven or eight times "before he could ride him with confidence," though afterwards he succeeded in making him go quietly. These remarks are made not with the intention of detracting from the reputation of one who was beyond all question foremost of the boldest horsemen that ever crossed Leicestershire or any other country ; but merely to show that he was credited with an ability which no living man ever possessed, or ever will possess.

The Quorn, it will be remembered, was the first pack of which Mr. Smith was master, and he was the first master of that famous pack to hunt his own hounds, as all previous masters had employed a professional huntsman. Whatever Mr. Smith's abilities as a huntsman may have been, it is certain that no fence ever stopped him in making his cast ; but as far as can be gathered from all that has been written about him, he did not care much about slow-hunting runs. After he opened up the Tedworth Woodlands, a Hampshire farmer used to say that old George Carter, his first whipper-in and kennel huntsman, found the foxes and the Squire lost them. A clergyman, who prefers to be known as "I. H. G.," wrote a book about George Carter,

who was with Mr. Smith for about sixteen years, and hunted the hounds on certain days in the week in Hampshire. In criticising his master, then dead, George Carter is made to speak thus:—

He *would ride*, for you see he were a wonderful horseman, but his ways and mine didn't always agree. I liked to find a fox and have an hour and a half with him or more, and then kill him if I could, and somehow or other I could generally do that; but you see, sir, Mr. Smith used to say, "What's the good of caddling about after a fox all day?" and if he hunted one for forty minutes and didn't catch him, why then he gave him up and went and tried for another; and as soon as he had tired one horse, he had another to get on, and so it didn't signify; but *I* always knew what Mr. Smith's hounds were. Why, then, I remember one day we met at Weyhill; Mr. Smith came out as a gentleman, and I hunted the hounds. Well, sir, we found a fox at Ramridge . . . and just before we came to Chute Lodge there were a bit of plough, and I see a hound called Nabob feathering up a furrow and none o' the others could own it; but I know'd he were right, so I just said quietly, "Heic, Nabob, heic."

"What are you heicing for there?" says Mr. Smith.

"I beg your pardon, sir," I says, "but you see Nabob has got the line; he can't speak to it on the plough, but as soon as we get on the grass they will all open." And sure enough, sir, as soon as we got to the park palings, and through, away they went, and we killed our fox after a good hunting run.

Such were George Carter's remarks; but then no man is a hero in the eyes of his valet.

On the Quorn country becoming vacant, Mr. Smith decided to take it; but it is a curious coincidence that neither in Sir J. Eardley Wilmot's book, nor in any paper or magazine, is it revealed under what circumstances Mr. Smith came to take the country. In Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire he was well enough known: but it is nowhere to be discovered what reason prompted him, then without experience, to embark on

the duties of a M.F.H. Whether the suggestion was made to him that he should take the country, or whether it was his own idea, is a matter of uncertainty, on which a careful search has failed to throw any light.

However, be that as it may, he gave Mr. Musters a thousand guineas for some of his hounds, procured more from Belvoir, laid other kennels under contribution, and started the season 1806-7 with plenty of hounds and horses. His fame soon became noised abroad, and we find that for the first time the Duke of Rutland and his two brothers, Lord Charles and Lord Robert Manners, "honoured" Mr. Smith by meeting his hounds at Syston in December 1806, but that was not the last occasion on which they hunted with the Quorn. Fair sport appears to have been enjoyed on that occasion, and a brace of foxes were killed, the first at Syston, while the second, found at Barkby Holt, ran to Ashby Pasture and back to the Holt, where he was killed. Then, on Monday the 9th of January 1809, the hounds rolled over a game fox after a run of an hour and fifty minutes, at the end of which all but about half-a-dozen out of a large field were fairly beaten off. One of the keenest hunting men in the Quorn country at this time was a farrier named Thomas Varnam, of Kibworth, who shod a great many horses for the Quorn men. He was a fine horseman, and did a good deal of rough riding; but in Mr. Smith's second season his horse fell with him and he was killed on the spot.

In April 1808 Mr. Smith had a good run, finding his fox at Stewart's Hay at two in the afternoon. Thence the line lay by Martinshaw, Enderby, Aylstone Gorse, ultimately crossing South Fields and the New Walk, and finally, after a run of three hours and a half (the last seven miles without a check), the fox took refuge beneath a shed in the woodyard of Mr. Harrison,

with the hounds close at his brush. Mr. Smith, who appears to have been the only man up, dragged the fox from his hiding-place, and then started off to find his whippers-in.

Some of the runs chronicled aforetime require a good deal of explanation. Here, for instance, is one taken from a contemporary publication in February 1812. Mr. Smith found a fox at Barkby Holt, we are told, on the 20th January in that year. Hounds "ran him hard" for about an hour and a half into Tilton Wood, where, when hounds were on the point of killing him, a fresh fox jumped up, and led them to Edith Weston, where the run came to an end. Horses and hounds were so knocked up that they were left for the night at Cottesmore. "From Barkby Holt to Edith Weston," says the report, "is near thirty miles." As hounds actually ran that may have been the distance; but in a straight line it is as nearly as possible seventeen miles. It could not of course have been anything like straight, as hounds were an hour and a half in reaching Tilton Wood, six miles from Barkby Holt "as the crow flies." From Tilton Wood to Edith Weston is a distance of about twelve miles in a straight line, but no mention is made of the route taken, nor is the duration of the whole run given. This, however, is but one of many good runs which took place during the season 1811-12, as on one day four horses are said to have died from over-exertion, while several others were not expected to survive; a statement which, if true, does not say much for the humanity of the old school.

Mr. Smith's biography affords ample proof that he was accustomed to say funny things at times, and what would be described in modern language as given to put on "side." "He only wants a rider," is one of the sayings put into his mouth in reply to a man who said that he had an ungovernable horse. "Thank ye, but my

left hand shall be my martingale," is what he is reported to have said to some one who suggested that he should ride a particular horse in a martingale. A captain of militia has left it on record that when quartered at Loughborough in 1812 he often went over the kennels when Mr. Smith was away and Tom Wingfield reigned in his stead. The major of the regiment, the story goes, once had the temerity to ask Mr. Smith how he managed to remember the names of so many hounds. The master of the Quorn is stated to have made the reply that he should consider himself a great fool if he did not know every hound in a strange pack after having been out with them twice, and he added, "Sir, I suppose that you know the name of every man in your regiment." The major admitted that he did.

Not a little of what has been written about Mr. Smith must, I imagine, be taken with a big pinch of salt. On the day of his great Belvoir run Mr. White is said to have stuck in a bullfinch, and because he could not get out of the way invited Mr. Smith to charge him, which the master did, and then the story proceeds to say that they went on as if nothing had happened. Now if Mr. White, who was pretty well as hard and quite as heavy as Mr. Smith, could not make his way through the fence, it appears rather strange that Mr. Smith should be able not only to send Mr. White and his horse flying into the next field, but to get through himself; still more wonderful is it that neither horse should have fallen, for we all know the effect of a cannon out hunting. Some of these miraculous yarns may be true; but the chances are that many of them are built upon slender foundations.

That Mr. Smith was somewhat of a jealous rider is well known, and there is a rather good story told of him and Mr. Maxse. During Mr. Smith's time, or part of it, it was the fashion to have "hunter pairs" out, that is to

say, a man rode two greys, two chestnuts, two bays, or two roans in the day. On one occasion Mr. Maxse had two blacks out, and finding his second horse, during a good run, just in the nick of time, rode on happily. Mr. Smith not being so fortunate, and finding his first horse quite blown, was having some difficulty with a locked gate, which Mr. Maxse, coming up on a fresh horse, cleared easily, to the Squire's great disgust, for he had not noticed that Mr. Maxse had changed horses.

A statement that the Melton Hunt had become so much disorganised towards the end of the season 1812-13 that Mr. Charles Meynell had seceded from it, had its origin in a difficulty about subscriptions, a point on which Mr. Smith himself, most punctilious in money matters, was very particular; yet on the whole, thanks chiefly to Mr. Moore, the Quorn Hunt did their duty by the master, as nearly £3000 per annum is said to have been forthcoming from the Melton side alone, while on one occasion the amount almost reached £3600. In 1814 Mr. Musters gave up his Nottinghamshire country, and on going to the Badsworth again sold some hounds to Mr. Smith, who had a great liking for the strain; he weeded out his pack, and on starting cub-hunting showed the best of sport, any number of good runs taking place on the forest.

About this time Sir Francis Burdett was in great form with the Quorn, and, as some one said of him, "he dashes with as much gallantry after the hounds as in the political field—although in the latter we find him sometimes alone, with the former he generally leads a considerable majority."

The Marquis of Tavistock gave up his hounds (the Oakley) in 1815, and took a hunting-box at Quorndon, to hunt with Mr. Smith. Among other well-known followers of the Quorn at the time was Mr. Tom Heycock, who was intimately connected with the "four M"



era of Melton. His memory was remarkably tenacious, and when he was once started on his favourite subject of the men with whom he had ridden side by side over Leicestershire, there was, a contemporary of his once said, "no holding him." He was a brilliant horseman, and nothing pleased Sir James Musgrave, himself a bold rider, better than to give him a mount on a horse which had never been over a fence, without telling him the horse's antecedents.

Tom Heycock was an excellent sportsman, and for a time Mr. Smith was friendly enough with him ; but here is an incident related by a frequenter of the Quorn at the time :—

Nothing pleased Tom more than to tell how Sir James Musgrave challenged him to show the field how "the thing ought to be done" at a long check near a very awkward brook, which there was no chance of jumping, when a hard rider had shown them very decisively "how it ought not to be done." He began with "the Pony," and Mr. Assheton Smith, who had been very civil to him up to that point, was terribly annoyed by his taking one of his "sensation jumps" over a gate close in his wake. The great *maestro* was wont to do these things to get cheered, and was so cross at having to divide the applause this time, that he never spoke to Tom again except with a growl, and took no earthly notice of him at the great Rolleston meet of 1840. This was when he left Tedworth for a time to pay a visit with his hounds to Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, which is mentioned on another page.

Some ground for believing that Mr. Smith occasionally rode to the "gallery" is afforded by a passage in his Life :—

An instance of one of his diagonal leaps is thus recorded : The hounds, coming in the course of a run to an immensely high and steep bank, with a stile on the top of it, many gentlemen did not like its looks. Mr. Smith, throwing his whip into his left hand, and at the same time taking out his pocket-handkerchief (this was done by way of giving the thing an air of negligence), said, "So

you won't have it, gentlemen?" Then, taking the fence diagonally, "he, by his peculiarly light hand, made his horse take the fence in this way—first on the bank, then over the stile and down on the other side. Nobody else could take the fence in the same manner or would attempt it in any other."

If, however, there was a little flashiness about Mr. Smith's riding, there is no doubt of the courage he ever exhibited in the saddle. On one occasion, after a long hunt, his hounds ran from scent to view, the fox making for a rickyard on the outskirts of a village, a crowd quickly collecting. Mr. Smith, galloping down a big grass field, charged a six-barred white gate into a narrow lane, and then, with hardly enough space in which to collect his horse, jumped another gate out of the lane. A countryman, who was about to open the second gate, remarked: "What's the use of opening gates for a flying lossman?"

Mr. Heycock died in 1863. At a somewhat advanced age, a bad attack of jaundice overtook him. On partially recovering, he was sent to Leamington to recruit his health; but to no purpose. He lived, until he removed to Braunston, about three miles from Oakham, almost entirely at his farm at Owston. The frequenters of Tattersall's hardly knew him by sight, and the ring he liked best was an agricultural show one, with the hunter colts inside it. Over the Owston farm he schooled a number of hunters, and generally had on hand something with which Sir James Musgrave or some other shining light of Melton could do nothing. Sir Harry Goodricke's famous horse, Dr. Russell, baffled all the thrusters and breakers in the neighbourhood; but after a time Tom Heycock made him go quietly, and taught him to gallop, for this does not come by nature to all horses.

Shortly before Mr. Smith left Leicestershire, that is to say, in the year 1815, there appeared at Melton a well-known hunting man, Captain White—"Leicestershire White," as he was called—who looked over Joe Maiden's son "to see if he had good legs and feet."

Joe Maiden himself had a false leg, his own having been amputated. Captain White and Mr. Maxse kept house together, their dwelling receiving the name of Claret Lodge from the amount of wine they got through. Captain White is mentioned in "Nimrod's" *Quarterly Review* run, and there is an engraving of him jumping a gate, which "Snob" is attempting to open. He hunted from Melton, and then in 1842 took his leave of that place, where he was regarded as the last of the Mohicans, and became master of the Cheshire hounds, which he hunted for twelve seasons. During his early days, while staying at Melton, he went out to meet Lord Lonsdale's hounds, and took part in two capital runs, one of forty minutes and the other of an hour and ten minutes, the fox being killed in each instance. Captain White finished his day twenty-four miles from Melton, and after riding leisurely thither, he had a chop and a cup of tea, and then proceeded to ride to his residence, Park Hall, Derbyshire, a great many miles distant; he crossed the Peak of Derbyshire in a violent snow-storm, reaching home about midnight. Captain White, by the way, was known as the "Light Manchester," while his chum, Mr. Maxse, was called the "Heavy Bristol."

In April 1816 we find Mr. Smith writing a courteous letter to Mr. Cradock in connection with his coverts about Gumley. The master points out that it is the only place upon which they have to depend in the district, and that, though he knows it is Mr. Cradock's wish that foxes should be preserved, he states that he had been unlucky in not finding them in the coverts.

Mr. Smith was then drawing near the end of his period of mastership; but just as we hear nothing of how he came to take the Quorn country, so we learn nothing as to the reasons which caused him to resign, and, strange as it may seem, the very date of his retire-

ment does not appear to be a matter of certainty. Sir John Eardley Wilmot, in his "Life of Mr. Smith," makes the latter go to the Burton country in 1816; but Mrs. Musters, in "Hunting Songs and Sport," gives the period of Mr. Smith's mastership of the Quorn as from 1806 to 1817, and these are doubtless the correct dates. Confirmation of this opinion is afforded by the *Stanford Mercury* for the 25th July 1817, wherein it is stated that Mr. Walker was about to vacate the Burton country and would be succeeded by Mr. Smith, "under the immediate patronage of the Monson family," while in the issue of the same paper for 1st August 1817 is a paragraph to the effect that it was "expected" that Mr. Osbaldeston would hunt Leicestershire, as he was in treaty with Mr. Smith for the purchase of Quorndon Hall. This, perhaps, may be taken as settling the question of dates. Leicestershire, as a whole, regretted Mr. Smith's departure, for, though he was hasty in temper, and at times somewhat overbearing, he hunted the country with zeal, kept up a capital pack of hounds, mounted his men well, showed excellent sport, and gave his subscribers good value for their money.

Mr. Smith, as is well known, was a good cricketer, an ardent yachtsman, and in his earlier days a good shot, but after his younger life he scarcely ever handled a gun. Mr. Smith died in 1858, at the age of eighty-two. It had always been his ambition to hunt his own hounds at the age of eighty, but this was denied him.

During Mr. Smith's mastership of the Quorn the Rev. Dr. Ford, for forty-five years vicar of Melton Mowbray, and of whom mention is made elsewhere, wrote a poem called "The Melton Hunt," which was composed about the year 1813. Mr. Ferneley the artist found a copy of the verses among some old papers, and gave them to Mr. Smith's biographer. The poem is as follows :—



Saob. Mr. White. Lord Ahanley. Mr. John Moore. Mr. Oshalesfon. Mr. Coke. Mr. Craddock. Sir Harry Goudbricke.

TALLY-HO ! AND AWAY. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



## THE MELTON HUNT, 1813

“ I must have liberty  
 Withal, as large a charter as the wind,  
 To blow on whom I please ; for so fools have,  
 And they that are most galled with my folly,  
 They most must laugh.”—SHAKSPEARE.

I sing Fox-hunting, and the gen'rous rage  
 Which spurs the noble youth of this new age,  
 With careless toil, all for their country's good,  
 To rid us of those vermin of the wood  
 That nightly steal, and for their luncheon hoard  
 The *poultry* which should smoke upon our board.  
 Such feats advent'rous through the hard-run day,  
 From dull *November* to all charming *May*,  
 Call for the poet's best and readiest rhyme  
 In strains at once familiar and sublime.  
 Oh ! could my muse resemble such a chase,  
 And with the riders keep an equal pace,  
 Though cautious, bold ; cool, yet with ardour fired ;  
 Free, without check : impetuous, yet untired.

Ye knowing sportsmen, foremost of the lead,  
 Who keep no turnpike, and no fences heed ;  
 Who crack the echoing whip, go off in style,  
 Enjoy the sport, and pace through every wile—  
 Now found, now lost, and now again in view—  
 The cunning fugitive ye close pursue :  
 Ye *booted senators*, who for me *frank*,  
 Claiming post after post an unpaid thank ;  
 Who, with yourselves, bring thousands yearly down  
 To glut the cravings of this sharp-set town,  
 Whose trickful tradesmen, farmers, rogues in *grain*,  
 Thrive by your wants, and by your losses gain,  
 Scramble who most at sight your *bills* shall share,—  
 “ Take in a hunter,” and the booty's fair :  
 Be candid, hunters, if, once famed in Greek,  
 Faintly your foreign dialect I speak,  
 Up to your phrases if I'm found unable,  
 Not tutored in the science of your stable.  
 Besides, *our* tribe, you know, scarce hunt at all,  
 Save for *preferment*, and the well-cribbed *stall* ;

## THE QUORN HUNT

Yet by your partial notice made thus rich,  
 Raised by your favours to my *honour's* pitch,  
 I'll try to set the table whilst you quaff,  
 If not on roar, on a facetious laugh,  
 Whilst spice of Latin shall with harmless jest,  
 Like poignant *Cayenne*, give my olio zest.

Not as their fathers erst "with early horn,"  
 Our modern hunters now "salute the morn,"  
 'Tis noon, ere these in scarlet bright array  
 Commence th' achievements of the dubious day,  
 Each on his steed, sleek-coated and high fed,  
 From *sire* to *dam* in *calendar* well bred ;  
 For in the *jockey's heraldry* the stud  
 Must boast descent from *ancestry* of blood :  
 As well you might a *hobby-horse* bestride,  
 As mount a *roadster* of no lineal pride.  
 Here blacks, browns, bays, and chestnuts, most renowned  
 For spirit, temper, shape, price, fill the ground ;  
 Each brags his favourite prowess in the field,  
 "My *grey mare* to no better *horse* shall *yield* ;"  
 But Forester's fine eye and single glance  
 Finds out the latent blemish as they prance ;  
 Deep skilled to scan the solid worth that lies  
 In horses, men, and their true qualities.  
 Hear him but talk, what music on his tongue !  
 It cheers the old, it fascinates the young :  
 Look in his face, no doubt the counterpart,  
 The honest, liberal sentiment of heart.  
 Hark forward how they bear ; nor them restrains,  
 Or driving blast, or storm with drenching rains,  
 What springs they make, o'er ditches, post, and rail,  
 And dash and plunge through *Belvoir's stick-fast vale* !  
 In at the death 'tis glorious to arrive ;  
 To claim the *brush*, no mean prerogative :  
 Thrown out, and some thrown off, besplashed with mire,  
 A motley group—peer—parson—grazier—squire.

Home safe returned, how changed ! studious they dress,  
 In newest fashion for the sumptuous *mess* ;  
 Set out with Lucry's complete bill of fare :  
 Fish by the mail—delicious, costly, rare ;  
 High-seasoned dishes,—fricassees—ragout,  
 All that the sav'ry pamp'ring art can do.



They eat like hunters, frequent bumpers drain,  
 Of flavoured claret and of brisk champagne.  
 Flushed with the grape, like Persia's prince grown vain,  
 They thrice each bullfinch charge, and thrice "they slay the slain"  
 WHERE SMITH WOULD DRAW, what lengths with *freshmen* go,  
 To break them into service passing show!

"Saddle White Surrey for the field to-morrow."  
 But ah! unlooked for, to their spleen and sorrow,  
 The next day "comes a frost, a killing frost,"  
 All's at a stand, and all their pleasure crossed.  
 'To town some scamper, and the odds are even,  
 Who first get seats in *Chapel of St. Stephen*,  
 To do their duty there, State flaws detect,  
 Invent new laws, and trespasses correct;  
 The frost now gone, they're down again in mind,  
 And motion quicker than the verging wind.  
 To sober whist, some *soberly* betake,  
 Though deep the rubber, deeper yet the stake,  
 Fixed as *stanch pointers* to a practised set,  
 Well read in *Hoyle*, on every deal who bet;  
 And cards played out, what a confused din  
 Of blame, or praise, as the sets lose or win!  
 "You played the *Knave*, you might have played the *Deuce*."--  
 "You drew and *forced my Queen*."—"Pray, spare abuse."--  
 "You cut my hand to pieces, threw away  
 Your highest diamond, and you call this Play?"--  
 "There a cool fifty goes! Before we part,  
 'Take my advice, get Bob Short's rules by heart.'  
 So oft began the midnight conversation,  
 So closed as oft in mutual altercation.

But now a scene how brilliant hath ta'en place,  
 Where beauty, elegance, and softest grace,  
 Of highest female rank—resistless can  
 Charm and control that lawless creature, *man*;  
 Improve his morals, harmonise his heart,  
 And *tenderness to fortitude* impart!  
*School of Politeness*, be our club hence named,  
 For kindest conjugal attention famed,  
 Each well deserving that pure bliss of life,  
 The sweet endearments of a lovely *wife*:  
 Be Benedict of Beatrice possessed,

## THE QUORN HUNT

Like Cavendish, Powlett, Worcester, Plymouth blessed,  
 Like Forester . . . . .  
 . . . . . I leave a lengthened space  
 Where *bachelors forlorn* may find a place ;  
 Aylesford and Dartmouth, gallant Craven, May,  
 All-polished Mayler, and Sir Robert Gay.

This round of labour ruddy health insures,  
 To courage stirs, to hardiness inures ;  
 Thus trained, my masters, you would meet the foe,  
 Furious to battle, as to covert go.  
*A cavalry already* formed the French to rout,  
 And Tally-ho ! your frantic war-whoop, shout,  
 But hold ! our furrows in the blade look green,  
 Our burdened ewes their tender lambs 'gin yeon ;  
 Timely you cease, of damages afraid,  
 Nor injure lands for summer crops new laid,  
 Pastures revive—foxes shall breed and rear,  
 Strong and inviting *cubs* for next LEAP YEAR.—SHALLOW.



## CHAPTER IV

MR. GEORGE OSBALDESTON (1817-1821, 1823-1827)

SIR BELLINGHAM GRAHAM (1821-1823)

LORD SOUTHAMPTON (1827-1831)



## CHAPTER IV

### MR. GEORGE OSBALDESTON

1817-1821, 1823-1827

MR. OSBALDESTON, like his predecessor, to whom he was eleven years junior in age, was born in London (Wimpole Street) on Boxing Day, 1787, and after some experience with harriers, which occasionally ran foxes, in 1809 or 1810 became master of the Burton country, buying the hounds of the fourth Lord Monson. In 1814 he migrated to the South Notts district, and after admitting that it was a most difficult country in which to kill foxes, left at the end of his first season to take the Atherstone country, of which he may be said to have been the first master, for then it was that the Atherstone became a really separate hunt. After two years there he succeeded Mr. Assheton Smith at Quorndon as the sixth master of the Quorn.

Mr. Osbaldeston came to Quorn with a great reputation for hound-breeding skill, horsemanship, and keenness in general, and the reputation was by no means undeserved. One who saw his hounds during his first mastership wrote that they were a very perfect pack—all of one size, of one colour, of the same form and general character, and showed more blood than any other hounds, while they appeared to be less than their real height; the last mentioned being, of course, a compliment to their symmetry. Somehow or other, however, Mr. Osbaldeston could not manage to please

everybody, and there were certainly two opinions about his character as a huntsman—

Who is the trumpeter blowing his horn?  
That is the trumpeter coming from Quorn,  
The very worst huntsman that ever was born,

are lines which were applied to Mr. Osbaldeston as a huntsman, while Mr. Grantley Berkeley in his published works refers to the Squire<sup>1</sup> in anything but complimentary terms. In the year 1865, long of course after Mr. Osbaldeston had given up hunting, there appeared in print a review of a book of Mr. Grantley Berkeley's and also a letter in which reflections were cast upon his system, and to these Mr. Osbaldeston replied in the following words:—

Now, sir, I hunted the Burton country in Lincolnshire; the Spilsby in Lincolnshire; Mr. Musters's in Nottinghamshire; Lord Vernon's in Derbyshire; the Atherstone; the Holderness in Yorkshire; the Suffolk, the Quorn, the Pytchley and Hampshire, a period of more than thirty-five years; and, during that long career, I never heard any complaints conveyed through any of my friends, and I hunted the hounds myself and bred them myself. When I left the Burton country I was presented with a large silver waiter, the handles being in imitation of two foxes' heads, with an inscription expressive of their approbation of my hunting the country; and when I left the Pytchley I received a beautiful snuff-box from the Hunt with the following inscription: "To the best sportsman of any age or country."

Mr. Osbaldeston was saved the trouble of finding a fresh pack of hounds when he took the Quorn country, as he brought his own with him from the Atherstone, and they quickly took the eye of the Quorn men. A good many people had complimentary things to say of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Osbaldeston was called the Squire because he was the only commoner who then hunted a pack of hounds in Leicestershire, and he was very proud of the title.

their make and shape, and their hunting powers ; but the greatest compliment of all was when one who was often with them said that they did not in the least appear to mind being ridden over, or to be mixed up with the field, to which they appeared accustomed.

The fact appears to be that both the Squire and his hounds came to see that Leicestershire required a style which materially differed from that which would suffice elsewhere. From all accounts the Osbaldeston of Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, and the Atherstone country was not the Osbaldeston of Leicestershire. On coming to the Quorn he found that he had to conform to the peculiarities of the country, and he wisely adapted himself to circumstances ; yet even in his most rapid movements he always showed himself perfectly cognisant of what he intended to effect, and how to accomplish it. Those who knew him in countries other than the Quorn averred that as a huntsman he was patient, and most averse to interfering with the pack until they had quite failed to solve any difficulty which might have presented itself. "Often and often," writes one who constantly followed his hounds, "have I seen him grind his teeth in vexation, and heard him utter an anathema when his favourites were interdicted from feeling for the line by the continuous charge of a body of men whose one solitary idea was to follow a leader without other care or thought."

Mr. Grantley Berkeley possibly called him "flashy" because he was quick. He soon discovered that a good start was, if not everything, at least worth a good deal, and in this particular he was said to soon be a match for any of his followers. Having undertaken to hunt the Quorn country six days a week he had, of course, to strengthen his kennel, and towards this end he procured a large draft from Belvoir, the famous hound Furrier, then very young, being among the lot. The story has

often been told how Furrier was crooked owing to having been tied up too much at walk, and this was no doubt the reason of his being sent away from Belvoir. When any critic came to the kennels, and tried to obtain an end-on view of Furrier, the Squire would interpose and say in his shrill voice, "Not that way; look at him so," and Furrier would be turned broadside on, so that his shortcoming should not be seen.

At the end of a very long day, when hounds and horses were pretty well beaten, the indomitable Furrier was running at the head of the pack, and in his career jumped a very high gate, and from that moment he became a stud-hound. At first he was naturally used with care; but he was not long in making a name for himself, and before the Squire's second period of master-ship came to an end he rode up to Kirby gate on the first Monday in November with twenty (one account says forty) couples of bitches, all by Furrier, and in an ecstasy of pleasure the master said, "There, gentlemen, there they are. I have bred those beauties to please you—ride over them if you can."<sup>1</sup>

This was perhaps a rather injudicious challenge to issue, but as a matter of fact the hounds were not so much ridden over as those of some other masters of the Quorn. Mr. Osbaldeston made no pretence of stopping his field by a single wave of his hand as Mr. Greene did afterwards; but some of his pet anathemas, given in his loudest and shrillest falsetto, usually sufficed to secure elbow-room for his hounds.

Although these hounds were all that could be desired in point of make and shape—their necks, shoulders, loins, and limbs are said to have been as near perfection as

<sup>1</sup> During the time that Mr. Villebois was master of the Hampshire Hounds, he met on the 22nd December 1822 at Harmsworth, and on that occasion he took to the covert-side sixteen and a half couples of hounds by Pontiff, a favourite stallion hound of his, the dams being Vengeance, Thoughtless, Notable, and Milliner.



possible—there was one famous hound at Quorn called Vaulter, which was walked by one of the Squire's tenants in Yorkshire, and when he was sent in a note came with him to say that he should make a *good* hound, as he had eaten the mistress's prayer-book. Mr. Osbaldeston's packs, however, had two faults, and in pointing them out Mr. Grantley Berkeley was right—they ran quite mute, and were impatient on a middling scent. Their muteness was ascribed to the strain of Sir Thomas Mostyn (who hunted what is now the Bicester country), Furrier being by one of his stud-hounds which never threw his tongue; indeed, all Sir Thomas Mostyn's hounds were notoriously mute. Their impatience on a poor scent is said to have been engendered by the impetuosity of the field which followed them. Nevertheless, the Furrier pack were bred by Mr. Osbaldeston to answer a particular purpose, and they answered it; if they went away from covert with anything like a scent and on decent terms with their fox, they showed the best of sport. Such is contemporaneous criticism, though perhaps there is no pack in the United Kingdom which would not run under similar conditions.

It is well known, however, that Mr. Osbaldeston spent much of his time in kennel, and report says that his hounds were under such control as would almost have satisfied the authorities in these dog-muzzling days (1898).

It has been said that the words, "Bitches turn over," sufficed to make the two sexes go apart; but too much credence need not be placed on the anecdote, since it has been told of three or four kennels, while, to make the story perfect, the dogs should at least have been as well versed in English as the ladies of the kennel.

The Squire thoroughly threw his back into hunting the Quorn country, and he showed much excellent sport. Hunting six days a week, however, made a strain upon Mr. Osbaldeston's resources, and it was not long before

he stipulated for an increased subscription, which was granted him, and the season 1819-20 began in tolerably brilliant fashion. On the opening day at Kirby Gate in 1819, three very decent runs fell to the lot of the hounds, and on subsequent days the sport was good. Mr. Osbaldeston, being a country gentleman bred and born (his property was in Yorkshire), was quite in touch with the farmers, who at that time preserved foxes well for him, whereas formerly they had "crabbed these gentlemen fox-hunters." The Squire, too, whatever his later failings may have been, bought all his oats, hay, and other things from the farmers, so the latter soon came to see that hunting, even if productive of some damage, was not without its better side. The country people, too, were taken by the Squire's zeal and interest in them; for, instead of hunting the fox with their own sheep and other dogs, they kept them carefully tied up when hounds were about.

Excellent as was the sport shown by Mr. Osbaldeston, some of the runs must have been grossly exaggerated. We read, for example, of a run which began at Marriott's Gorse, from which a fox slipped away as soon as he heard hounds coming. The Squire, however, soon hit off his line, and after running a ring back to where he was found, was forced out again, and gave a run of an hour and seven minutes, during which twenty miles are said to have been covered! Well may we say with Dominie Sampson, "Prodigious!" The fox in question went to ground, and I find a note to the effect that, as foxes were becoming rather scarce, it was deemed prudent to dig out this one and "reserve him for another day's sport."

During Mr. Osbaldeston's tenure of mastership some of his best known followers were Lord Plymouth, who, living with his family at Melton Lodge, kept up a remarkably fine stable of hunters. He seldom had fewer

than twenty horses, and he would pay, it is said, as much as £1000—he certainly bought several at £500 and £600 each—and then when he had bought these costly steeds he discovered that he could not ride some of them; he would, therefore, put up Dick Christian, so that he might have the satisfaction of seeing them go. Sir James Musgrave, of course, was a standing dish, and “Paddy” Maher was one of the shining lights of Melton, he possessing a thorough knowledge of everything pertaining to hounds, horses, and hunting. No coffee-houser was he. As soon as hounds were in covert he was all attention; on a good start he placed his whole hope, and if he only slipped well away, no hounds could shake him off. If he were left behind, as the best of men are sometimes, he would just dodge along the roads and lanes at a trot; but never could he be induced to ride a stern chase. He is said to have ridden horses which were somewhat deficient in blood, and though they could all jump like cats, could not catch up hounds. There is a story that on one occasion Mr. Valentine Maher, while riding one of his “countrymen”—he had several Irish horses—crept behind a haystack so that people should not see that his horse was beaten. One of the best of his stud, however, was a grey Irish horse named Erin, which stood barely fifteen hands one inch. Mr. Assheton Smith, who had ridden him a few times, pronounced him to be “the stoutest horse then in Leicestershire.” Of Erin’s jumping powers “Paddy” Maher once had ample proof. Maher, who was very strong in the arms, rode all his horses in snaffle bridles, which, as an authority has reminded us, is not the same thing as riding a snaffle-bridle horse. One fine day Erin “took charge” of his owner, and with his head in the air started off at full gallop, jumping in his career the dry lock of a canal in the Vale of Belvoir. Of Leicestershire White mention is made elsewhere, while Mr. Maxse, whose name is

so often mentioned in Mr. Assheton Smith's Life, was also hunting in Leicestershire in Squire Osbaldeston's time. Mr. Maxse was one of the welter weights of the Hunt, but he had a formidable rival in "Saddle" Campbell—so called from the place where his property was situate; and though Campbell's weight exceeded that of Mr. Maxse, the former generally contrived to beat the latter, until at last the "Ajax of heavy weights," as Mr. Smith called Mr. Maxse, became so angry that whenever it was possible he made a point of always going out with the pack which was not to be honoured with "Saddle" Campbell's company.

The Marquis of Tweeddale, a most determined horseman, occasionally hunted with the Quorn, though he was more often seen with the Belvoir, and he it was who once mounted the Duke of Wellington on so perfect a hunter that the duke was afterwards heard to say that Leicestershire was an easier country to cross than he thought. Then, again, "Davie" Baird, afterwards Sir David, a great chum of "Saddle" Campbell's, was another of the "Scottish Brigade," who did great things. The story goes that no sooner did he appear in Leicestershire than he at once took his place in the front rank, though owning at the time a rather rickety stud. It is said that he could ride anything, and would "shove along" on a bad horse better than most people could on a good one. An old song, said to have been written by "Saddle" Campbell, at that time the Melton laureate, made mention of—

Davie Baird on Jamie Hope  
Swift o'er the grassy slope.

Jamie Hope was "a thoroughbred cross-made horse which had been stumbling about with a whip in Scotland for several years." Davie Baird got hold of him, and after riding him through a famous run in his well-

known style, sold him for £700, and on the sale reaching the ears of his father, a master of hounds in Scotland, Baird *père* is reported to have said, "It matters little, for though Davie has sold the fiddle, he has not parted with the bow." This anecdote has been told in a variety of forms of different people; but as it was related of Davie Baird in *Bell's Life* as long ago as 1840, it is as likely as not to be the original version.

During Mr. Osbaldeston's mastership of the Quorn, John Gully used to spend a good deal of time with the Squire, for though not much of a bruiser over a country he was devoted to hunting, and afterwards, when he bought Ackworth Park, near Pontefract, he became a great supporter of the Badsworth. Among John Gully's hunters was a much-admired horse called Jack Ketch, and in connection with him a curious story was current in Leicestershire. After Gully's stud was sold, a Meltonian whose new horse was admired said that it was Gully's Jack Ketch, and he added that there never was a better. Whereupon another man said, "My good sir, you surely must be crazy, for the horse I am now riding is Gully's Jack Ketch. I bought him from Milton, who purchased all Gully's horses." Only a few days later a third and a fourth Jack Ketch turned up, and on inquiries being set on foot it appeared that the dealer in question, knowing that the original Jack Ketch had a marvellous reputation, reduplicated him *ad lib.*, so that eventually no one claimed to have the original horse.

In the company of thrusters in which he found himself the Squire was quite capable of holding his own; but to timber he always had an intense dislike. "I hate that d——d carpentry," was his remark when timber came in the line; but over other kinds of fences he rode fearlessly enough.

It was in the early part of 1821 that he met with the

bad fall which caused him ever afterwards to object to any one riding near him at a fence. He was hunting with Lord Anson's hounds in the Atherstone country when his horse, after dropping his hind legs into a ditch, rolled over. Sir James Musgrave, riding close in his wake, was not able to stop his horse in time, and jumped first on the Squire's prostrate steed and then on to Mr. Osbaldeston himself, and with such violence as to break his leg in two places.<sup>1</sup> A couple of doctors were fortunately out, and everything possible was done for the unfortunate gentleman; but at the end of the season 1820-21 Mr. Osbaldeston gave up the Quorn, and exchanging with Sir Bellingham Graham, who was then master of the Hambledon, went into Hampshire, where however he remained for a short time only, and the spring of 1823 saw him back at Quorn again, when the sport he had previously shown was to a great extent revived. There was a rumour that the country was short of foxes in some parts; but whether the statement was true or whether steps were taken to remedy the deficiency there is no means of knowing, but at any rate the Squire killed, or is said to have killed, thirty brace of foxes before regular hunting began in November 1824.

During cub-hunting many good runs took place, and November set in with a rare vein of sport.

On the 15th November 1824 Mr. Osbaldeston met at Seagrave; found in Munday's Gorse, and hounds ran the fox to old Dalby Wood, and then after a ring of about four or five miles, hunted him well to Schoby Scholes, where the hounds unluckily

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<sup>1</sup> On the day after the Squire's accident Tom Sebright, then first whipper-in, hunted the hounds, and had one of the best runs he ever saw in Leicestershire. The fox which gave the run was known as "Perpetual Motion"; he was found at Schoby Scholes, and ran, or is said to have run, to Garthorpe Lodge, a fourteen miles in and out journey, with only one short check, in an hour and twenty minutes,

hit upon a fresh fox, and getting away on good terms with him raced away by Saxelby and Grimstone. At Schoby Scholes the hounds slipped all the field except Mr. Holyoake and Mr. Oxendon, who was on a visit to Dr. Leeke, of Nottinghamshire. These two, it is true, had a bad start, but they were at any rate able to see the way hounds went, though perhaps their view was a distant one. Eventually the fox was lost in the "Six Hills country," just in the nick of time as the report says, for every horse which struggled on to the finish was completely done up. It was, from all accounts, useless for any one to try to overtake the pack, but even those who rode the lanes and byways could not keep up with them, and at the end there was hardly a horse which could trot.

Only a few days afterwards, that is to say, on the 23rd of November, another good run took place. After meeting at Gaddesby, hounds went to Cream Gorse, whence a fox stole away, and the hounds being on the outside of the covert at the time, they soon hit off the line. The fox skirted Ashby Pasture to Thorpe Trussells, and ran thence to Thorpe Satchville, afterwards taking a direct line to Burrough Hill. At Adcock's Barn the fox made a short turn to the left, almost in face of the horsemen, and eventually the hounds ran into him, after a very fast forty minutes, in the middle of a large field between Melton and Kirby Park. All those who held good places up to Adcock's Barn were thrown out at that point, and never saw hounds again until long after they had killed their fox.

The only man with the hounds all through was that fine horseman Dick Burton, Mr. Osbaldeston's first whipper-in, and for more than a mile he saw the fox in front of the hounds. Close to the field in which he was pulled down, the fox crossed a road close to Dick Burton, and then he lay down "coiled up like a dog before the fire," as Dick said. Three couples of hounds, which were two hundred yards ahead of the rest, ran right over him; but the main body, less hasty, killed him.

On the 26th November 1825 the Quorn met at Brawnston, near Leicester, and finding a second fox at Glen Gorse, hounds ran him for some distance; but just as they were on the point of killing him, Mr. Osbaldeston suddenly stopped the hounds owing to their being overridden by one of the field, who must have

been on an uncommonly good hunter, unless he had managed to pick up his second horse, as when the hounds were stopped all the horses were said to have had quite enough galloping, and Mr. Holyoake was obliged to have his hunter bled.

The season 1824-25 appears to have opened with every promise of success. House accommodation was at a premium, while sport continued to be of the best, all the horses being knocked up day after day from all accounts. For example, on the 23rd December 1824 hounds met at Owthorpe and had an extremely fast run of an hour and fifteen minutes. Sir Harry Goodricke had the luck to pick up his second or third horse, and took the fox from the hounds. Mr. Osbaldeston and Dick Burton were beaten some way from the finish, while of those who rode one horse all through the run, the honour lay with Lord Rancliffe, who struggled on nearly to the end, Mr. Holyoake and Mr. Johnson being perhaps the next best off. Just about this time Dick Burton sustained one of his many serious falls; his horse rolled over him, and one of the bones of the pelvis was broken.

Mr. Osbaldeston was styled by Colonel Lowther "the moonlight hunter" and "Georgium Sidus," but great as was his reputation as a horseman, he was sometimes beaten. There was a somewhat notorious hunter named Assheton which eventually became the property of Mr. Holyoake, who was too heavy for him, and could not ride him; nor for that matter could Mr. Osbaldeston; though on one occasion Assheton carried him well in a run from Billesdon Coplow to Ranksborough. Dick Burton, however, who could always get on with Assheton, had ridden him during a hard morning's work, and it was only when the edge was thus taken off him that the Squire was able to shine upon him.<sup>1</sup> At this time, how-

<sup>1</sup> Ferneley, the artist, painted Mr. Osbaldeston mounted on Assheton in the act of jumping a gate—in spite of his hatred of carpentry—while Sir



ever, Parson Empson, "the flying parson," as he was called, had a horse called "Shaver" which was Assheton's master, as he was just as speedy, as stout, and was as good a fencer, while in addition he had a much more angelic temper.

In bringing to a close these notes on Mr. Osbaldeston's career as master of the Quorn, it must suffice to note that he was a good all-round sportsman and athlete. He was a good steeplechase rider, shot, pedestrian, pugilist, and billiard player; but an extended notice of his excellence in these diversions would be outside the purview of this book. His old friend Mr. Wheeler has written about him and his exploits in *Sportascrapiana*, and in another book<sup>1</sup> the present writer has given sundry particulars concerning "the Squire." He unfortunately took to the turf; lost much money at racing, and died in somewhat straitened circumstances, at his house in St. John's Wood, on the 1st August 1866. It was in the year 1831, when Mr. Osbaldeston was in his forty-sixth year, that he accomplished at Newmarket his famous ride of two hundred miles in eight hours and forty minutes, using twenty-eight horses.

Harry Goodricke on Dr. Russell, and Mr. Holyoake on Crossbar, are jumping the fence at each side. When Mr. Osbaldeston saw the picture he is reported to have exclaimed that a cleverer hunter than Assheton was never foaled. A portrait of Mr. Osbaldeston was also engraved by Roffe, from a painting by Dr. Woodhouse, Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, in 1835 or 1836.

<sup>1</sup> *Notitia Venatica*, new edition (Nimmo).

## SIR BELLINGHAM GRAHAM

1821-1823

AS already mentioned, that fine sportsman Sir Bellingham Graham ruled the Quorn country for a couple of seasons (1821-23) between Mr. Osbaldeston's two periods of mastership; and on reviewing his career as a master of hounds, one can scarcely avoid agreeing with "Nimrod," who regretted that Sir Bellingham had not confined himself to one good country instead of hunting so many, "some of which were of an indifferent character." Personally I do not desire to brand as indifferent such countries as the Pytchley, Badsworth, Atherstone, Shiffnal (now the Albrighton), and Shropshire; but Sir Bellingham Graham was, like Mr. Osbaldeston, a master who hopped about from country to country, "to one thing constant never."

He began his career by succeeding Mr. Musters in the Badsworth country, which he hunted for two seasons; then he migrated to the Atherstone, where he remained for three years; and then he hunted the Pytchley for a single season (1820-21), and it may here be mentioned that Sir Bellingham Graham and Mr. Osbaldeston are the only two men who have ever been masters of both the famous hunts, the Quorn and Pytchley. In addition, Sir Bellingham had a turn with the Hambledon (when he exchanged with Mr. Osbaldeston, and declared that the subscription would not find him in spur-straps and blacking). He did not stay long in Hampshire, the hunting not being brilliant enough for him.

It is, however, with the Quorn only that I am now concerned. Sir Bellingham Graham's reputation had so far preceded him into Leicestershire that it was taken for granted he would hunt the country as well as it could be hunted, and in proof of this he received the largest subscription ever given to a master of the Quorn, namely, considerably over four thousand a year. Soon after Mr. Osbaldeston's accident with Lord Anson's hounds, the former wrote to the members of the Hunt, through the medium of the local paper, to say that he was compelled to give up the country; and Sir Bellingham wrote to the same journal offering himself as the Squire's successor, an offer which was readily accepted.

Sir Bellingham Graham, a fine horseman, is said to have had in the Quorn stables the best collection of good big horses ever seen, not even excepting Lord Sefton's, and no one ever hunted the country in more liberal style. During the two seasons he ruled Leicestershire there was not, it was said, a single instance of his not being with hounds, which was the more remarkable because when he first came he did not know the country; while in his first season the long-continued rain had made the country uncommonly deep and holding. Sir Bellingham was a heavy weight, but he went with the best, and his straight riding brought him to grief at the beginning of his second season, for while hunting his hounds on Boxing Day 1822, he rode at a gate—or at an ox-fence, according to another account—apparently close to the post, which his horse struck, and down came the pair, while one of the field, riding behind, fell at the same obstacle, and tumbled on Sir Bellingham, who remained insensible, it is said, for something like twenty-four hours, during which time he was bled three times, in accordance with the drastic measures of the day. His chest was much injured, and for five days he was confined to his bed; but on the seventh he was muffled up

in shawls, and managed to get out in a carriage, just to see his hounds find ; but he even went further ; he is reported to have called for one of his horses, which was being ridden by a groom, and to have taken command of his hounds, until, thoroughly exhausted, he was compelled to give in.

Sir Bellingham Graham had a famous horse called Cock Robin, on which he once slipped away from covert and a large field by jumping in and out of some double rails, between which there was barely room to land. On another occasion, when the hounds ran hard from Glen Gorse to Stanton Wood, the master took the lead and kept it, notwithstanding the fact that several of the best light weights in England, including Colonel George Anson and Mr. William Coke, were very close to him, but they could not overtake him.

It was during Sir Bellingham Graham's mastership that there died a somewhat remarkable Leicestershire character, one Job Inchley, a horse-dealer. He was born about 1753, and in his younger days sold a good many horses to the followers of Mr. Meynell, and for some reason or other his portrait was painted by Marshall for some nobleman, whose name is not given. Unlike most dealers, however, Job Inchley had fancies of his own, and after a while he dealt in classes of horses which did not find general favour. A critic of the time says that he at one time bought blood horses of the type called by Jacob Wardel "slashers," but which were not suitable for the purpose intended. Some of these he trained and ran in races ; but they "were not fast enough to tire themselves, nor stout enough to win." Eventually Job Inchley's fancies brought him to grief, and after parting with his little freehold property, he died in London without a shilling, during the mastership of Sir Bellingham Graham. In his dress, Job is said to have been very peculiar. To all appearance he always wore

the same clothes ; his boots were seldom cleaned ; but when they were it was with a wisp of hay and some water. In his horse-dealing transactions he was said to be straight enough ; but he was undoubtedly eccentric.

During the autumn of 1821 the idea appears to have occurred to the Leicestershire hunting men that it would be a good thing to have a pack of staghounds, and the proposal was made that they should be established under the mastership of Lord Brudenell, but the project fell through.

Mr. Osbaldeston was, however, somewhat late in making known his intention to resign the country, for although the Quorn fixtures were published in the local papers on the 2nd November 1821, Mr. Osbaldeston's letter intimating his intention of resigning the country did not appear in print until the 29th of the month, though Sir Bellingham Graham offered his services on the 22nd ; but it had doubtless been arranged between them that the one would give up and the other would apply for the country.

As was only to be expected, Sir Bellingham Graham showed capital sport during the short time he hunted the Quorn country. One Saturday in November 1821, the hounds met at Preston Wold, and found a fox in Mr. Packe's gardens.

The fox went away over the lawn towards Barton-on-the-Wold, and hounds ran at a great pace thence to Walton Thorns, and, skirting Mr. Story's plantation and Rugdale Hall, went on, leaving Schoby Scholes a short distance on the right. The fox then crossed Dalby Wold in the direction of the Windmill, which he left on the right, and running thence to Broughton Grounds, went nearly to Parson's Gorse, and turning short at Broughton, crossed the Smite near Clawson, and bore to the left in the direction of Kin-noulton. Thence the line lay in the direction of Hose, and the fox crossed the Vale of Belvoir ; but by that time he was done up, and hounds rolled him over in a field near Piper Hole, where he lay down, the run having lasted two hours and ten minutes. It is

said that there was not a check from start to finish, and that out of a field of about three hundred, four only saw the finish. It was one of the best runs, we are told, ever known.

In November 1822 Sir Bellingham met with his second accident, his horse falling with him at a big fence, but beyond being bruised, he sustained no serious injury.

March 1823 saw another good run, but neither the place of meeting nor the covert in which the fox was found is mentioned. The account is that

The hounds had one of the severest days recollected for some years past. A fox went away towards Stretton Hall, by Glenn Town to Burton Overy by Carlton, near to Stoughton Holt, through Stourton Wood to Stourton Town, and afterwards to Church Langton. The fox then crossed the Welland, ran through Langton Caudle, and thence to Glooston Wood to Hallaton Bottoms. Running thence nearly to Allerton Wood, the line lay to Stockerston Wood, where hounds were stopped. The hounds found directly they were put into covert, and those who were a few minutes late saw nothing of the run. The master, Mr. Anson, and Mr. Coke were the only three who were with hounds from start to finish.

In April of 1823 Sir Bellingham Graham announced his intention of giving up the Quorn, and at the same time Mr. Osbaldeston sought the suffrages of the members of the Hunt for the second time, and his offer was accepted. His second period of mastership was marked by several good runs. Sir Bellingham Graham left the Quorn country, to the great regret of his field.

## LORD SOUTHAMPTON

1827-1831

AMONG the many keen and hard-riding hunting men who from time to time had visited Leicestershire was the Lord Southampton who had hunted with the Quorn, and he was, in the year 1827, induced to become the next master of that famous pack.

Mr. Osbaldeston signalised his last season as master of the Quorn by taking the hounds out every day, the hour of meeting being ten o'clock on some days and half-an-hour later on others, while towards the end of May a notice appeared in the *Leicester Journal* that all persons having any claim upon the Quorn Hunt for coverts and earth-stopping should attend at certain places on certain days and at specified hours to have their claims satisfied, though whether this notice was issued by the Squire or Lord Southampton is not certain.

It would appear, however, that everything was not as it should be at the time of Lord Southampton's accession to office. When Mr. Osbaldeston's second term of mastership came to an end, the Quorn country was said to be nearly destitute of foxes. For some time previously it had been found expedient to cultivate friendly relations with the workmen in the Swithland slate quarries, in order to prevent the destruction of the cubs bred in the rocks and coverts near the works. Apparently some kindly sportsman had been in the habit of propitiating the quarrymen, but by the time July 1827 arrived, this had become nobody's business, so the

supply of foxes had suffered in consequence, and the local journal entertained fears not only for the litters in the immediate vicinity of the quarries, but also in the Alscroft and Newtown Woods, as well as in the Grooby coverts, Barndon Hill, Grace Dieu Park, and the Forest generally. In Oakley, Piper, and Spring Woods, and a few other places, there was reason to hope for better things, and there was something like a chance for the Melton and Harborough sides. In earlier days, when every possible care was taken, "an importation of foxes was almost uniformly necessary in the Quorndon Hunt," but the paper in question reminded its readers that this was not to be wondered at considering that, as the hounds were out every day, more foxes were killed in the Quorn than in any other hunt in England.

Lord Southampton certainly started at a disadvantage, for he was young and knew nothing about hunting. Moreover, when he signified his intention of taking the Quorn country he had neither hounds, that is to say none to speak of, nor huntsman. Mr. Osbaldeston left some old stagers (about forty couples, it is said), considerably blemished; some of them had lost an eye. Lord Southampton bought about twenty couples from Mr. Nicolls, of the New Forest, but there was not a sound hound among them. To these cripples and aged ones were added about twenty couples from Mr. Musters and some from Belvoir, so that "on paper" the scratch kennel appeared fairly strong, but out of the whole no huntsman could have made up one decent pack, for the Belvoir hounds were nearly twice the size of those from the New Forest. With this material did Lord Southampton attempt to maintain the prestige of the famous Quorn Hunt.

Lord Southampton, however, was unremitting in his endeavours to show sport; he considered the farmers' interests and was extremely popular with them, while his



affability gained him friends everywhere. He perhaps made one mistake, the result of his want of experience in hunting,—he allowed himself to be guided by a clique at Melton who had ends of their own to serve, and listening to these advisers sometimes led to some portion of the country being too seldom visited.

The first two seasons of Lord Southampton's mastership were anything but brilliant. When he collected his first scratch pack he promoted to the post of huntsman Dick Burton, who had whipped in to Assheton Smith and also to Mr. Osbaldeston. Like many more, however, though an excellent whipper-in, he turned out a poor huntsman, and neither he nor his hounds gave satisfaction to the followers of the Quorn.

Although Lord Southampton showed in his first season a very moderate amount of sport, fogs appear to have been rather prevalent after the first week or two of the regular hunting season. On December 3, 1827, the Quorn met at Six Hills, when among the field were Lord Rancliffe, Lord Plymouth, Lord Darlington, and Sir Harry Goodricke. The field arrived at the place of meeting only to find it enveloped in fog. Lord Southampton was at first inclined to make the best of circumstances, and try what could be done in another district, but Dick Burton recommended an hour's wait, and this was eventually agreed to. It was then possible to draw, and hounds had a very decent run. Just before the hounds moved off, however, it was discovered that Dick Burton's horse had in some unaccountable manner badly staked himself, so Lord Rancliffe proffered his second horse, which was thankfully accepted—an incident which seems to show that at that time the Quorn huntsman did not always enjoy the luxury of a second horse, or he would have ridden it. Lord Rancliffe's horse is described as having been a Galloway, by Cervantes, and on him Dick Burton went in his best style, clearing at

the close of the run a gate which no other horse in the field would face. There is not, perhaps, very much data to go upon, but in a great many instances we find it recorded that many Leicestershire hunters, at any rate up to the end of the twenties, and in some cases a little later, were, comparatively speaking, ponies. Old Stephen Goodall, riding something like nineteen stone, would never look at a horse much over fifteen hands; Lord Jersey had three in his stable which were said not to reach that height; Lord Alvanley's best hunter is reported to have been under fifteen hands one inch, and other instances might be quoted. To-day, as most people are aware, the ideal Leicestershire horse is not under fifteen hands three inches, though of course there are some exceptions; but it is a matter of stable faith that a good big one is better than a good little one, and, as Whyte-Melville has remarked, when a little horse gets to the end of a big run, especially under a big weight, he is mentioned because he *is* a little one.

On the 21st January 1828 the Quorn had a run which was estimated at eighteen miles from point to point, but hounds were said to have gone thirty-five miles, and the time was given as two hours seventeen minutes. The time may be correct, but the distance certainly is not.

Before the year 1828 had run its course the Quorn hounds made their appearance at the covert-side (Mowsley) "in a new carriage invented by the Earl of Southampton, and constructed at his Lordship's private cost." This vehicle was sufficiently capacious to convey any reasonable number of hounds to a fixture. It was built by Ferneley of Thrussington, and was covered in at the top with black glazed leather, with railings at the side, while on the front sat the coachman, huntsman, and whippers-in. This hound-van is said to have cost £200.

About a month after Lord Southampton's hound-van had excited the interest and admiration of the inhabitants of the Quorn country, Colonel Russell, on a horse named Chesterfield (which formerly belonged to the earl of that name, but at the time of the feat belonged to Lord Alvanley), made a somewhat memorable leap. The hounds were running hard, the gallant colonel was, as usual, taking a line of his own, and was sailing along in a good position, when an apparently practicable fence came in the way. At it went the colonel, and by the time his horse took off he was aware that there was a very wide dyke on the landing side, and which, as he afterwards confessed, he would not have ridden at had he known of its existence. Chesterfield, however, was equal to the occasion, and on subsequent measurement the distance cleared was proved to be 33 feet 3 inches.

At the time of which we are speaking (season 1828-29) hunting brought a good deal of grist to the local mill, and some ingenious statistician calculated that in the different Leicestershire hunting centres there were kept no fewer than six hundred horses, and these were exclusively used in following the hounds. Taking the annual expense of each of these at £60, a contributor to the *Leicester Journal* reckoned that no less a sum than £36,000 was brought into the county in the course of one year, to say nothing of what was expended by their owners in other directions. In those days hunting men were practically compelled, whether they liked it or not, to buy their forage from local vendors, so at that time hunting necessarily put a good deal of money into the pockets of the inhabitants. So for that matter it does now. Yet in the *Field* of February 27, 1897, will be found a letter written by a Leicestershire man to "Brooksby," one of the *Field's* hunting correspondents. The writer of the letter draws attention to the fact that at a Hunt ball then recently given a band and the

refreshments were supplied by caterers carrying on business beyond the confines of Leicestershire, while at the present time there are too many ship oats and too much foreign hay used in the forage of hunters.

At the beginning of the season 1828-29, or rather towards the close of cub-hunting, bad luck overtook the Quorn establishment, as one whipper-in broke his leg, and the other his collar-bone; so hunting was for a short time suspended, and then, pending their convalescence, the master had to do the best he could with the kennelman and a groom officiating as whippers-in.

For close upon two seasons Lord Southampton rubbed along as best he could by getting drafts from different kennels, but towards the close of his second season (1828-29) an opportunity for effecting a vast improvement in the kennel presented itself, and Lord Southampton at once jumped at it. The Marquis of Tavistock having determined to give up the Oakley country at the end of the season 1828-29 to the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, finished his hunting several weeks before the Quorn were due to stop, and sold his hounds to Lord Southampton, who promptly had them removed to the Quorn kennels, and two days after their arrival they made their first appearance at a Leicestershire covert-side. They were a capital pack, too, having a good deal of the old Pytchley and Badminton blood in them. George Mountford (a first-class man in the kennel, in the field, and in the saddle), who had been the Oakley huntsman, came with them, bringing with him his second whipper-in, George Beers, while Will Derry, who was born in Nottinghamshire, and learned his business under Mr. Musters, and who whipped in to Dick Burton, remained on as first whipper-in. Mountford had originally whipped in to the Berkeley hounds for several seasons, and had been whipper-in to the Oakley before he was appointed huntsman. Some of

the critics of the time said that he was not a very neat horseman, but he kept well with his hounds, and was "the civilest best-tempered fellow in the world."

The first time the new hounds were out the fixture was Breedon Clouds, an extensive covert near Ashby-de-la-Zouch. This was regarded as a notable day in the Quorn country, and men from other hunts came to see how the new pack would perform on this, their first, and Dick Burton's last, day in Leicestershire. The hounds made quite a favourable impression. They found a good fox as soon as they were in covert; hustled him well for five-and-thirty minutes, and then after a check had to put their noses down. They lost their fox, and, as they were not in anything like condition, hounds were then taken home; but they showed that they could run. Two or three days later they were out again at Woodhouse Cleaves and found a fox at Beacon Hill. He ran nicely as far as Garendon Park, where he turned back to the forest, and after ringing about for an hour was pulled down. The work in the forest, though not to everybody's liking, served to show that the hounds could hunt as well as run, and in connection with Charnwood Forest Lord Alvanley used to say that if you should happen to be killed there you would have your gravestone beside you. Lord Southampton hunted up to May Day, and having in the meantime been helped from Belvoir, found his kennel vastly improved.

The opening of the season 1829-30 again saw George Mountford huntsman, with Will Derry and George Beers whipping in to him. The excellence of Mountford in the kennel was seen as soon as cub-hunting began. He had ten horses for his own use and the whippers-in six or seven apiece. Both master and huntsman, and, of course, the field had their reward this season in very much improved sport. Before cub-hunting was over several good runs had taken place, and the regular

season opened on Monday, November 2, at Kirby Gate, when the best things of the day were a fast twenty minutes in the morning and a very quick fifteen minutes in the afternoon. On the 4th November they had a brilliant run, about which no details are forthcoming; but one of the best runs of the season came off on Wednesday, 17th February 1830, when nearly two hundred horsemen met the Quorn at Six Hills, the time of meeting being, for some reason or other, twelve o'clock. A fox was found in Lord Aylesford's gorse, and hounds settled down at once, but a too anxious field overrode them, and a check of ten minutes was the result. Mountford, however, recovered the line, and thanks to a good scent, the hounds ran at a great pace for the next four miles, and as there were a good many ploughed fields in the line, it was, as a chronicler observed, "better adapted to killing the horses than the fox." Then the fox kept to the grass, left Melton Mowbray about a mile to the right, ran through Stapleford Park, the home of the cantankerous Lord Harborough, and eventually crossed the Whissendine. By the time the brook was reached the hounds had been running for an hour and fifty minutes, and although upwards of a hundred reached its brink, no more than about thirty succeeded in getting over. On went the hounds, until in about another three miles the fox managed to get to ground in Ranksborough Gorse, after a run of seventeen miles from where he was found, the distance being covered in two hours and ten minutes. About a dozen and a half of the morning's field saw the finish, among them being Lord Southampton, Sir Harry Goodricke, Mr. White, Mr. Maxse, Mr. Henry Thornton, and Dick Christian. On the following day another good run was brought off over a still better country, the hounds finding a fox at Barkby Holt and losing him at Garthorpe Hill—nine miles in fifty minutes; but the distance is, perhaps, a little flattered.



*Lord Brudenell.*

*Jack Stevens.*

THE PACE BEGINS TO TELL. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.





The pencils of various artists have made us familiar with the styles of hunting dress in vogue at different dates, but here is the description of a hunting attire which was brought to the notice of the *élite* during Lord Southampton's reign. The cut of the coat was described as being quite new, while the colour depended upon the hunt. It was a double-breasted garment with small lapels; the pockets at the hips were cut across, and they had rather wide flaps, while there were also flaps across each breast, but the top ones were not required to be made with pockets. A buff, or white, double-breasted cashmere waistcoat, with buttons wide apart, four on each side, was *de rigueur*, the vest itself being bound with black galloon. The breeches were of white cord, with ribs running about three to the inch, and they were made to fit as tight as possible from the crutch downwards. They were short at the knee, by which one may presume they had no continuations, and the tops were braced up tightly to meet them. A green and crimson silk cravat completed what the journal in question designated "this very fashionable and decidedly new hunting dress." Very new indeed, one would imagine.

Lord Southampton, like his predecessors, had occupied Quorndon Hall, but partly perhaps owing to its distance from some of the fixtures, and partly from other reasons, he determined, in 1830, to exchange that residence for Belgrave, not very far from Leicester, while new kennels were built at Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

Belgrave Hall, though doubtless a very eligible hunting residence, had not sufficient stabling for Lord Southampton's purposes, so he leased the Bazaar, in the Humberstone Gate, and there he kept a portion of his stud, while he gladdened the hearts of the surrounding farmers by ordering in ample supplies of forage. Quorndon Hall then came once more into the market, and its attractions were duly set forth in the local journals, the

description being evidently drawn up by the hand of a skilful agent. For the benefit of those who may not have read of the house, it may be stated that it was surrounded by 117 acres of land, and was described as standing in the heart of the Leicestershire country. One of its features was the fine long stable containing twenty-one stalls and five loose-boxes, while there was stabling for eighteen more horses. A covered ride afforded a scope for exercise in frosty or inclement weather; previous masters had lodged their hounds in the commodious kennels; cottages for huntsman and stud-groom were ready to hand, while the usual appurtenances of saddle-room, granary, and what not, left nothing to be desired. The house itself, "equal to the accommodation of a family of consequence," included dining, morning, and drawing-rooms, hall or billiard room, four-and-twenty bedrooms, besides domestic offices, and the property was described as lying on the mail-coach road to Manchester, three miles from Loughborough, eight from Leicester, fifteen from Melton, sixteen from Nottingham, and one hundred and seven from London.

The beginning of Lord Southampton's last season, 1830-31, was far from auspicious. Even at that time it was the custom for the Quorn to meet at Kirby Gate on the first Monday in November; but for some reason or other which his followers did not know, Lord Southampton did not open the season until the second Monday in the month, to the great annoyance of a good many members of the Hunt, who arrived at the end of October in anticipation of the usual arrangements being carried out. A beginning once made, the hounds showed excellent sport; but from some unexplained cause Lord Southampton saw little of it. Than he no one could be keener about hunting during his first three seasons, but during his last he appeared to

become very slack, and from all accounts seldom went out; he had since he took the hounds improved a good deal in his riding, so it was a matter of no little surprise to find him become so indifferent to hunting during his last season.

In addition to many other good runs enjoyed by the Quorn during the time Lord Southampton was master, may be mentioned one which took place on the 4th March 1831, the best, according to some authorities, that had been recorded since the famous Billesdon Coplow run in the year 1800. The Quorn met at Brooksby, the hunting residence of Lord Brudenell. The popularity of a Quorn Friday was even then established, for there was a field of almost abnormal proportions present. The early morning was sufficiently hazy as to cause not a few followers of the hounds to consider whether hunting would be possible; but by eleven o'clock the weather was bright enough, and no better day could have been desired.

The first draw was Cream Gorse, in which a fox was at once found, and he made the best of his way to Ashby Pasture, a line which has been lauded over and over again by many a generation of hunting men. It was one of those grand scenting days which come all too seldom in the course of a season, and hounds never gave their fox a moment's rest. Right through Ashby Pasture they drove him, and then the fox bethought him of doubling back to try if his original home, Cream Gorse, would afford the shelter he required. He deemed it better not to run the risk of coming to closer quarters with the pack, and so skirting the gorse shaped his course for Frisby and crossed the Leicester turnpike road. The passage over this highway was not of superlative difficulty for the field; but when the fox was found to have crossed the Wreake river the way was not so plain. Lord Gardner, a fine horseman, and Lord Brudenell, who turned aside from nothing, came down at the water nearly side by side, and in company with Will Derry, one of the whippers-in, reached the far side in safety, leaving many of their companions unable to effect a crossing by the same route. Meantime the fox had set his mask

for Schoby Scholes, running about midway between Grimston and Saxelby to Wartnarby Stone Pits. At undiminished pace the hounds ran to Holwell Mouth. The fox skirted the village of Holwell, and with the pack close at his brush made no attempt to gain the covert close at hand, but, running a circular course, went to Goadby, thence to Eastwell, going within a few fields of Eaton and Braunston, leaving Belvoir Castle only a short distance on the left hand. Reynard then made his way to Braunston Lings covert, and was finally lost in Croxton Park, after a hard run of an hour and thirty minutes.

Our forefathers may have been, and doubtless were, excellent sportsmen, but what with stable management—well, not at its best—and perhaps a too ardent desire to see the finish of every run, the horses had rather a bad time of it. This notable run cost Lord Southampton's famous horse Forefather, and Lord Brudenell's no less celebrated hunter Dandy, their lives: they died through over-exertion, while many other horses were so done up that they were never worth anything afterwards. Through this great run Will Derry rode Segar; he was the only horse which went through from start to finish, and he was not a bit the worse for his exertions. This was not the first time Will Derry had the honour of beating the whole field, as in a run from near Rolleston to Dingley he was first, Mr. Greene and one or two others being the only riders near him. Segar was afterwards bought by Sir Harry Goodricke.

Lord Southampton, as will be seen, gave up the Quorn hounds in 1831, but it was not until the year 1838, the first year of Lord Suffield's mastership, that Mr. Bernal Osborne wrote an account of a famous run with Lord Southampton's hounds. On the occasion in question the fox "found himself," and George Mountford was quickly after him. Mountford, however, had a fall, and when the hounds checked he was not with them, so Will Derry (first whipper-in) catching hold of them

caused them to run heel way, and eventually the fox saved his brush, but Mr. Bernal Osborne, to give point to his poem, makes the run end with a kill. These spirited verses are as follows :—

## MELTON IN 1830

## A DAY WITH LORD SOUTHAMPTON'S HOUNDS

Midst lowering skies, o'ercast and tinged with red,  
 Sol, slowly rising, quits his ocean bed ;  
 Chases the vapours of the night away,  
 Illumines Melton, and proclaims the day ;  
 Far in the East his glorious orb appears,  
 And smiles at once on *Helpers* and on *Peers*.  
 O'er gorse and wood alike, o'er hill and plain,  
 On brooks, still bumpers from the recent rain,  
 His brightest rays he cast ; as if he meant  
 To gladden nature, but to spoil the scent.  
 Though bright his rising, soon his face he shrouds  
 Behind a mantle of o'erspreading clouds ;  
 And ere John Clod has drove afield his wain,  
 His jacket's moistened with a drizzling rain.

Now Melton sportsmen for the chase prepare :  
 Some curl their wigs,—some merely curl their hair,—  
 And curse that rashness which has brought them down  
 So far from Crockford's, and the joys of town.  
 Tenacious of his *toggery*, Musgrave fears  
 To spoil his garments, worn for many years ;  
 And, though already mounted, back he goes,  
 And changes old ones for still older clothes :  
 (What's in a coat? When hounds run, he is wont  
 To show its back much oftener than its front.)  
 Now here a youth who goes too fast to last,  
 On milk and soda-water breaks his fast ;  
 Here older hands, with stronger stomachs blest,  
 With tea and brandy lull their nerves to rest.  
 Now, trampling at the door, the hack appears,  
 Impatient of delay he kicks and rears.  
 Away! away! once mounted, on they ride,  
 And soon are panting at the cover side.

## THE QUORN HUNT

Hark to that cheering note ! they've found him,—see  
 The gorse is waving like a troubled sea ;  
 He's gone away ; hark, halloo ! to the cry !  
 Like swallows skimming, o'er the fields they fly.  
 " Give them a moment's time,—hold hard, sir, pray ;  
 You'll stop his pulling ere we've done to-day."  
 Look at the gallant pack, away they sweep !  
 The pace is killing and the country deep.  
 Rolleston is far behind, and on our right,  
 The house at Noseley just appears in sight ;  
 By Glooston Wood, o'er Cranoe Field they pass,  
 Where many a horse declining missed the grass.

On, on they go—and at a trimming pace ;  
 See, Baird is racing for a foremost place ;  
 Yet much I do mistrust me, if his steed  
 Can hold that pace, and always go full speed.  
 White spurts and cranes, now skirting looks for balks,  
 And gallops faster than our Rokeby talks.  
 See Chesterfield advance with steady hand,  
 " Swish at a rasper," and in safety land ;  
 Who sits his horse so well ? or at a race,  
 Drives four-in-hand with greater skill or grace ?  
 And when hounds really run, like him can show,  
 How fifteen stone should o'er the country go ?

If not in person monstrous, yet in weight  
 Campbell comes crashing through a new-made gate ;  
 Now, " by his fathers' gods ! " you hear him swear,  
 And much you wonder who those fathers were.  
 Now Plymouth, at a brook, with Gilmour crams,  
 While Drummond <sup>1</sup> *jobs* his horse and *jobbing* damns ;  
 With iron hand, and seat devoid of grace,  
 You see at once the counter is his place ;  
 Now on this side, and now on that he pitches,  
 Strikes all his timber, fathoms all his ditches,  
 Till, by a binder caught, a weight of lead,  
 He comes at last to anchor on his head.

Quite at his case, yet stealing o'er the grass,  
 From out the struggling crowd see Wilton pass.

<sup>1</sup> This gentleman was better appreciated in the City than at Melton.

Here Goodricke, perfect in his hand and seat,  
 Rides like a sportsman who can do the feat ;  
 And Stanley, who in courage may not yield  
 To him of yore, who fought on Flodden field,  
 Forgets his weight, and labours all he can  
 To show *Perfection*,<sup>1</sup> both in horse and man.  
 Carried beyond excitement's wildest bounds,  
 His horse forgetting, seeing but the hounds,  
 Kinnaird, that dear enthusiast of the chase,  
 Heeds not how deep the ground, nor slacks his pace :  
 Will nothing turn or stop him ? nothing check  
 That form of riding, but a broken neck ?

Here Lowther follows slowly on the track,  
 And pines in secret for his "tailing pack."  
 (We speak of years gone by,—for now we're told  
 Their style of hunting is not *always cold*,  
 And that they draw till one : We therefore pray,  
 "That they, like other dogs, may have their day ;"  
 Since Lambert's judgment has reformed the pack,  
 Improved their breeding, and dispensed with Slack,<sup>2</sup>  
 All head and legs no longer now they look,  
 But stoop to pick a leaf from Goosey's<sup>3</sup> book.)  
 The gallant Colonel, pottering at the gaps,  
 First damns, then envies "those hard-riding chaps."

Gardner,<sup>4</sup> who *then* for rasps ne'er would swerve,  
 And thought all riding to consist in nerve  
 And swimming rivers,—owned the pace was good,  
 But still would have it *faster if he could*.  
 See Heycock flies along ; and few there be,  
 Where all ride hard, can harder ride than he.

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<sup>1</sup> Not improperly so called, for he was one of the best horses in Leicestershire.

<sup>2</sup> The former huntsman of the Cottesmore hounds, well worthy of his name.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Forester's huntsman. His lordship was admitted on all hands to have the most perfect pack, and to have been one of the best riders in England.

<sup>4</sup> Of those who went so well in this run, Lord Gardner alone remained to tell the tale. He married Miss Fortescue, the talented actress, and lived for many years in complete seclusion in Hampshire.

With spurs and hand-whip Matuscevitx plies,—  
 O'er ridge and furrow swiftly *Zodiac* flies ;  
 But though his steed be made of gallant stuff,  
 "Tarnation, *Zodiac*,<sup>1</sup> you will get enough !"

Lyne Stephens onward holds a steady course,  
 And Grantham gallops faster than his horse.  
 Green, leaning slightly forward, passes by,  
 But quickly turning shows how good his eye.  
 Pinned in his shoulders, see old Johnny Moore ;<sup>2</sup>  
 A gate half-open,—Rokeby slips before,  
 Forgets his manners in his love of place,  
 And slams the swinging gate in Johnny's face,  
 Then, spurring onward with a graceful seat,  
 Unlike Camilla,<sup>3</sup> gallops *through* the wheat.

Now some, alas ! before their horses fail ;  
 Flight after flight succeeds of post and rail.  
 Then Langton Hill appears—the crowd decline,  
 And keep their riding 'till they've had their wine.  
 Now Brudenell<sup>4</sup> leads, and well does *Langar*<sup>5</sup> show  
 The rattling pace that strength with blood can go.  
 Wilton and Gardner next their station took,  
 And Derry,<sup>6</sup> following close on Billy Coke.  
 Sloping to meet them, stood exposed to view  
 An awkward piece of timber, stiff and new ;  
 No other place will do but this alone,  
 No choice is left,—go at it, or go home.

<sup>1</sup> The gallant Count's own words. He was celebrated as being the best foreigner over a country then imported.

<sup>2</sup> This was a jest at Mr. Moore's rheumatism.

<sup>3</sup> A lady who would have had many admirers among the farmers of the present day :

Illa vel intactæ segetis per summa volaret  
 Gramina : nec teneras cursu læsisset aristas.—*Virgil*.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Brudenell succeeded his father as Earl of Cardigan, and gained imperishable fame by leading the Light Cavalry Brigade in the Balaclava Charge. His memoir, written by the late Major Whyte-Melville, appeared in the fifteenth volume of *Baily's Magazine*.

<sup>5</sup> Lord Brudenell's horse, well known in that day.

<sup>6</sup> An excellent rider, and one of the best servants that ever came into a hunting field.



*Langar* leaps short, and see, on high his tail,  
 Turned in the air, proclaims how strong the rail.  
 Over they go, together rise again,  
 For Brudenell tight in hand retains the rein.  
 Here *Leporello*<sup>1</sup> fell; a harder fate  
 Attends *his* falling,—where he fell, he sate.  
 Now Billy Coke, who never lost a chance,  
 Down the hill's side came rattling on *Advance*,  
 And though *he saw the willows*, still he took  
 His line, and crammed him straight at Langton Brook;  
 But vain the effort,—gazing on the flood,  
 Narcissus-like, upon the bank he stood,  
 Then struggling headlong fell; and see, he's done!  
 He *washed* his master, but he lost the run.  
 More on the left, see Wilton kiss the plain;  
 Then "Time!" to *Pugilist*<sup>2</sup> was called in vain.  
 Without a pause, by Bowden now they fly,  
 The pace so good you scarcely hear the cry;  
 With speed unchecked, see bravely o'er yon hill,  
 Brudenell alone maintains his station still.  
 Here's Dingley Gorse; "By Jove, they run in view!"  
 On Reynard struggles, on the pack pursue;  
 The earths are open—will he reach the cover?  
 Who-hoop! he sinks exhausted; all is over.

How are the mighty fallen! lulled to rest  
 By fifty minutes of Southampton's best;  
 Some deep in ditches lie, 'midst brambles tossed;  
 Others, more prudent, are *by Farmers crossed*;<sup>3</sup>  
 These lost their start, from those, the hounds had turned,  
 Yet something still from Brudenell all have learned;  
 And now for once, a Melton field must own,  
 Fairly and cleanly, they were all "cut down."<sup>4</sup>

The backward crowd are still the first to chide,  
 For all can censure where but few can ride.  
 Let those blame others who themselves excel,  
 And pass their judgment, who have ridden well.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Gardner's horse.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Wilton's horse.

<sup>3</sup> A very common excuse with some people at that time.

<sup>4</sup> A favourite expression of Lord Macdonald's, who was one of the most promising riders of his day, and very well able, himself, to give a practical illustration of it.

## THE QUORN HUNT

Each timid skirter thinks it is his right  
 To hurt your feelings and display his spite.  
 If blest with iron nerves "you ride for fame,  
 And seek in hunting nothing but a name";  
 If tender of your person in the chase,  
 "You love the hounds, but still refuse to race."  
 "Look at him now!" on all sides it is said,  
 "I always knew it, damn him, he's afraid!"  
 These blame the system, master, hounds, and all,  
 And swear the huntsman does not like a fall;  
 Not prone to cavil or to take offence,  
 Some in *good nature* pardon *want of sense*;  
 And think a *smiling and unmeaning* face  
 Can Ewart stop, or Willis,<sup>1</sup> when they race.  
 On t'other tack some err, and make their boast,  
 Hounds run the hardest when they're damned the most.

Who to Southampton could in judgment yield?  
 With a light hand he ruled a stubborn field;  
 Now firm, now gentle, as occasion proved,  
 And on all sides alike, *both feared and loved*.  
 Come then again! resume thy proper place!  
 Manage the kennel, and direct the chase;  
 An equal balance keep, the skilters chide,  
 And check *Spring Captains*<sup>2</sup> when they try to ride.  
 For want of practice all our talent's lost;  
 Hounds never run, but still the same they cost.  
 What shall we do without thee? for I hear  
 The country's vacant in another year.  
 Old times, old sport bring back! and once again  
 Melton shall flourish 'neath thy golden reign.

It appears to have been generally understood from the first that Lord Southampton did not regard himself, nor was he regarded by the Quorn men, as likely to hunt the country for any great length of time. The giving up of Quorndon Hall and the removal to the incon-

<sup>1</sup> Two gentlemen who occasioned more oaths to be uttered, one may safely say, than any two others in England. While they spoiled sport, they endangered future prospects.

<sup>2</sup> A well-known Leicestershire appellation at that time for military gentlemen who arrived late in the season.

venient premises in Leicester was thought by a good many to presage a change, and about midway in the season 1830-31 came the announcement that Lord Southampton would give up the hounds at the end of the season. Accordingly, on Wednesday the 6th April 1831 there was held, at the Three Crowns, Leicester, a meeting to take into consideration the future hunting of the country. The Marquis of Hastings presided, and there were present Lord Rancliffe, Sir G. H. Beaumont, the Reverends S. Vere Dashwood and C. J. Bewicke, Messrs. C. Loraine Smith, E. C. and E. B. Hartopp, E. H. Cheney, C. M. Phillipps, C. Nevill, H. Green, J. E. Wescomb, E. B. Farnham, H. and E. Dawson, J. B. Humfrey, C. G. Mundy, W. H. Wilson, C. W. Packe, J. King, M. Babington, T. Walker, J. Cradock, W. Martin, and R. Hames; while letters of apology were received from Lord Stamford, Sir R. Bromley, Sir John Palmer, Sir Justinian Isham, Sir F. G. Fowke, Messrs. Herrick, and several others, the writers intimating their readiness to fall in with the views of the meeting. Sir Harry Goodricke, who had for some time hunted in Leicestershire, had previously been approached, and had signified his willingness to take over the country, stating that should it be offered to him "by the resident gentry and proprietors of land and coverts," he should "hold himself accountable to those gentlemen alone for his manner of hunting their country." The unanimous resolution of the meeting was that Sir Harry Goodricke's offer be accepted—he had intimated that he would hunt the country at his own cost—and on the Marquis of Hastings conveying to Sir Harry an intimation of what had taken place at the meeting, the master elect wrote a gracious letter saying that nothing could have given him greater pleasure than the knowledge that the country-side had been unanimous in offering him the mastership. He would be happy to accept it, and was determined to give

satisfaction by hunting the country in a regular and sportsmanlike manner.

Some little while after giving up the Quorn country, Lord Southampton retired to his country seat, Whittlebury, and eventually hunted the Grafton country till about 1862. Ten years later (July 1872) Lord Southampton died in London at the age of sixty-nine, he having been born in 1803, and so was twenty-four years old when he elected to become master of the Quorn.



## CHAPTER V

SIR HARRY GOODRICKE (1831-1833)

MR. HOLYOAKE GOODRICKE (1833-1835)

MR. ROWLAND ERRINGTON (1835-1838)



## CHAPTER V

### SIR HARRY GOODRICKE

1831 1833

WITH the resignation of Lord Southampton came the end of the Quorn hounds under that name, as they were thenceforward known as Sir Harry Goodricke's. Sir Harry of Ribston Hall, Knaresborough, Yorkshire, who was born on the 16th September 1797, was the seventh baronet and last male heir of his race, being the son of the sixth baronet, who died in 1802. His mother was Charlotte Fortescue, sister of Lord Clermont, and on the death of the latter Sir Harry came into possession of something like £60,000 a year, including the fine Irish demesnes of Ravensdale and Clermont in county Louth and Clermont Lodge in Norfolk.

Sir Harry Goodricke's invincible passion for hunting made him a very willing successor to Lord Southampton; but, disliking the kennels provided by his predecessor at Humberstone Gate, he promptly set about building new ones at Thrussington, about five miles from Melton. No expense was spared in the undertaking, but the want of experience in matters connected with stable and kennel led to partial failure. There is no evidence on the point; but the chances are that the design was entrusted to an architect who was not well versed in the details of stable and kennel requirements, with the result that while a tolerably imposing pile sprung up on the left of the road

from Leicester to Melton, and nearly midway between the two places, on the bank of the river, it was ill suited to the accommodation of a large hunting establishment. The stable was conceived upon a bad plan, while the lodging-rooms for hounds and the yards were "cribbed, cabined, and confined," and so there was no inducement for the next master, whose turn came all too soon, to take to them.

The cub-hunting season of 1831 saw Sir Harry Goodricke duly installed as the M.F.H., a dinner in honour of the event being held at the George Hotel, Melton, on the 6th October. More than eighty guests were present; Mr. Inett, of Kettleby, presided over the festive gathering, and was supported by that old sportsman Mr. Marriott. The chairman proposed the health of Sir Harry in what is called "felicitous terms," and among the toasts of the evening was "The immortal memory of Meynell, the founder of the Quorn Hunt." After dinner Mr. G. Marriott, jun., gave the following song, written for the occasion by the author of one or two other hunting songs:—

#### MELTONIAN SONG

That Sire of the Chase—our crack Nimrod, old Meynell,  
 Once said to a famed brother sportsman at Quorn,  
 That "the fame and the fun of a Le'stershire kennel  
 Should cease—when the sun ceased to gladden the morn."  
 He's gone, but each year proves how true the prediction;  
 Unmarred is our sport—undiminished our fame,  
 He's gone, and this day shows his words were no fiction,  
 For "Hunting" and "Le'stershire" still mean the same.

*CHORUS (after each verse).*

Then round with the bottle, and let it not tarry,  
 While we hail, while we honour, the man of our choice;  
 In a bumper, come pledge me—the gallant Sir Harry,  
 Whom we love in our hearts, as we hail with our voice.



Other masters we've had, in the days of our glory—  
 Osbaldeston, Sefton, Tom Smith, and "The Graeme,"  
 Southampton the last, not the least in our story,  
 Giving Melton its mainspring and Le'stershire fame.  
 And if for a season our joy has been clouded,  
 A day like the present's too happy for pain ;  
 In the prospect before us what pleasures are crowded,  
 For oh, in our Goodricke we've Meynell again.

The Coplow again shall be famous in story,  
 And high be the deeds we shall do from Seg's Hill ;  
 And Melton once more, in the blaze of its glory,  
 Under Goodricke shall flourish—under Goodricke shall fill ;  
 Again shall our coverts like Courts be attended ;  
 Again shall our "Field Days" boast many a Star,  
 The friends shall return who have Melton befriended,  
 'Thynne, Forester, Kinnaird, Moore, Maxse, and Maher.

And Alvanley too—shall Meltonia forget thee ?  
 Oh never—while wit, and while wine, have a charm ;  
 Thou too wilt return, blithe as ever we met thee,  
 And with joke, fun, and glee, still old sorrow disarm ;  
 And Chesterfield too, and our honoured De Wilton,  
 With Plymouth and Stanley, shall come in the train,  
 And the Lord of the Chase, and the Monarch of Melton,  
 Shall be Harry of Ribston, success to his reign.

Sir Harry Goodricke, the sixth baronet, father of him concerning whom this chapter is written, was also a master of hounds in an unpretentious way, having in conjunction with Colonel Wardle kept a pack in Flintshire, with kennels at Colonel Wardle's residence, Hartsheath. Coming from Yorkshire, it is certain that the spirit of sport was strong in both father and son, and in the latter it showed itself at a tolerably early age. While at Eton, possibly on Montem Day, the young Goodricke had to don some kind of fancy dress and pass before the King. To the amazement of every one, the future M.F.H. made his appearance in a red hunting-coat reaching down to his heels. It was made for his father's whipper-in in Flintshire. This very fancy costume

attracted the King's attention, for he was no stranger to a scarlet coat, so he inquired who the youthful wearer might be, and on being told his name remarked that he was a sporting bred one.

As a rider to hounds Sir Harry Goodricke was quite first-rate, for not only could he ride a perfect horse over a difficult country, but it is said that he could also get along on a rough one. At any rate he figured as a prominent performer in several long and severe runs.

In 1824, when Mr. Osbaldeston was master of the Quorn for the first time, the hounds met at Widmerpool and found in Walton Thorns a good fox—the best fox they came upon during the season—which stood before them for an hour and fifty-five minutes, there being a good scent all the time. Towards the close of the first thirty minutes many horses were standing still, but “the Squire,” Sir Harry, and Mr. Holyoake continued in their places near the pack; Sir Harry's horse, however, lasted the longest. No more than a few days later the hounds met at Owsthorpe and had an exceedingly fast run of an hour and a quarter, and at the end of it Sir Harry, the only one up, took the fox from the hounds; but on that occasion he owed his position to the fact of having met his second horse near Six Hills; while about a couple of years later he was a conspicuous figure in Lord Lonsdale's famous run from Launde Wood, in the biggest part of the Harborough country; and when he became master of the Quorn he rode harder than ever. Then, on another day, when the Longford Brook came in the line—it had far overflowed its banks—he rode into the water, tumbled into the brook, and scrambled out on the other side.

In the hands of Sir Harry Goodricke the Hunt was kept up in first-rate style. There were upwards of fifty hunters in the stables and about one hundred couples of hounds, and the maintenance of these, together with the

payment of other expenses which he took upon his own shoulders, cost him something over six thousand pounds a year. That he was a good sportsman is clear from a story related of him to the effect that on one very wet evening he was seen at Melton with a lame hound in a lead, and he was taking it back to Thrussington, a task involving travelling at a foot's pace over upwards of ten miles of road.

With his Irish tenants Sir Harry was very popular, for he made it a point always to pass some part of the year on his Irish property. In Leicestershire, however, there was a rumour that at one time the master of the Quorn was not in high favour, because he had spoken in somewhat uncomplimentary terms of the horses bred by the farmers in his hunt. So far as can be discovered, the facts are that Sir Harry, who was always superexcellently mounted, was once approached by a Leicestershire farmer who had a hunter to sell. The horse was not up to the future master's high standard, and Sir Harry is said to have ventured the remark that for so good a country the horses bred therein were not up to the standard which might have been expected; upon this was based the story of his unpopularity.

If, however, there was any friction, it soon disappeared, for when he came to hunt the country no man could have stood higher in the farmers' estimation.

Concerning Sir Harry Goodricke's kennel there appears to be some uncertainty. It has been generally supposed that Sir Harry took over and kept, as he found them, Lord Southampton's hounds. As before remarked, however, Lord Southampton had the nucleus of a very good pack in the hounds Mountford brought with him from Oakley (Lord Tavistock's), whereas Sir Harry Goodricke admitted the truth of the criticism passed on his kennel to the effect that his hounds were not worthy of Leicestershire; but he declared that he would per-

severe until his kennel was satisfactory, if not perfect and as Sir Harry was rather a judge of a horse and a riding man than a hound man, the confession would seem to imply that the standard of the hounds was not high. To reconcile these two statements is not easy ; but, from what can be made out, it would appear that Sir Harry Goodricke sold Lord Southampton's pack (including the Oakley division) to Mr. Russell of the Warwickshire, and bought the hounds of Lord Petre, who gave up his Essex country in 1831, and we find one sportsman complaining that "Lord Petre's hounds ill supply the place of those he parted with." At the end of his first season, however, Sir Harry was able to buy the hounds of Mr. Shaw, when he, in consequence of the extent to which foxes were killed, gave up the country he hunted from Lichfield to the outskirts of Birmingham ; while Sir Harry also bought Mr. Saville's draft and twenty couples out of Norfolk belonging either to Sir Jacob Astley or Mr. Hill.

If, however, the hounds themselves left something to be desired, they managed in Mountford's hands to show some very good sport ; while, under so popular a master as Sir Harry Goodricke, rank and fashion set towards Leicestershire as much as ever. The Old Club at Melton claimed for its members Mr. T. Moore, Sir J. Musgrave, Mr. Val Maher, and Lord Forester. Sir Harry Goodricke, Mr. Gilmour, and Lord Gardner kept house together ; Mr. Stanley and Mr. Errington, who were brothers, had a joint establishment, as also had Lords Rokeby and Alvanley ; while Melton Lodge held Lord Kinnaird, the Messrs. Maxwell, Mr. Fairfax, Mr. White, Mr. Ewart, and Lord Plymouth ; Lord and Lady Sarah Ingestre, Sir John Kaye, and Colonel Drummond housed themselves at Leicester, and most places within reach of hounds had their visitors. Over Melton itself a great change was in progress. Only a few years before it was

rather a rackety place; men left their womankind at home, and, like their grooms, came to Melton without what advertisements call encumbrances. The bottle circulated freely after dinner, and men gambled a good deal.

A few years before Sir Harry Goodricke took the country, ladies, though they did not all hunt, began to come to Leicestershire, Lady Wilton being one of the first; and as her position in society and her amiability rendered her a leader of women, others hastened to follow her example, and her husband at once set about enlarging his house. Lady Stormont, Lady Edward Thynne, Mrs. Drummond, and Mrs. Lloyd were of the number of those who wintered at Melton, and the magnetic influence of female society completely revolutionised Melton.

Rather bad luck attended Sir Harry at the opening of his first season, for Mountford, his huntsman, was not able to take his place in the field, owing, it is said, to some affection of the throat, induced by constant holloaing and over-exertion; so, in the absence of his chief, Will Derry, the first whipper-in (he had formerly discharged the same duty with Mr. Musters) carried the horn. But though a satisfactory *locum tenens*, he was not thought to be Mountford's equal. On the 21st November 1831, Mountford being then laid up, the hounds met at Brooksby, a mile or two on the Leicester side of Kirby Gate, the familiar fixture selected by Henry Alken to represent "The Meet" in his well-known picture. Some persons then travelled to the covert-side like the man described by "Nimrod" in his *Quarterly Review* article as "lolling in his chaise and four." More than one noble lord drove up with his four-in-hand; while well-turned-out phaetons, buggys, and tilburys helped to swell the collection of vehicles, and hacks of the kind represented by Mr. Ackerman in "My Stud"

carried not a few to Brooksby. The day's sport, however, did not amount to much. A fox was soon found at Cream Gorse and as quickly lost, and a second fox was lost after a good thirty-five minutes, with only one check, *viâ* Great and Little Dalby, and then towards Lees-thorpe, beyond which place the fox ran the hounds out of scent. Thursday, February 25, 1832, saw the hounds at Norton-by-Galby. Glen Gorse gave a fox directly, and after running by Stretton Hall, Swadborough Lane, Bushby, and Scraftoft Gardens, the fox turned for Humberstone village; and after going back to Thurnley and eventually to Glen Gorse, he was killed after a capital run of an hour and a quarter, with no check to speak of. Almost a twelvemonth later, that is to say on the 27th February 1833, the hounds met at Six Hills, always a favourite portion of the Quorn country. Finding a fox at the Curate, hounds ran him by Willoughby village, near Wymeswold, Munday's Gorse, and Walton Thorns. Thence the line lay towards Thrussington Wolds, Ragdale, Schoby Scholes, and Lord Aylesford's Gorse; Grimston was left on the right, and the fox, running by Old Dalby and Nether Broughton, was eventually rolled over near Stapleford, after a good run of two hours.

A somewhat curious circumstance happened during Sir Harry Goodricke's mastership. Several times had he run foxes to ground near Widmerpool, and at last he determined at whatever trouble to get out another which had taken refuge in the same place. Spades and pickaxes were brought, and digging operations on an extended scale began. A large stone drain was broken into and the run fox duly driven out; but in the same drain were the skeletons of nine other foxes. Up to that time it had been supposed that it was the same fox which had so often betaken himself to this favourite shelter.

Another instance of man making the town is to be

found in the extent to which Melton was at this time (1833) patronised. A contributor to the *Leicester Journal* took the trouble to make the round of the Melton stables, and found that no fewer than 450 horses were quartered in the district. Sir Harry Goodricke headed the list with 52; then came Lord Forester 38, Lord Thynne 26, Lord Wilton 24, Mr. Stanley 18, Lord Gardner 17, Lord Kinnaird and Mr. Etherington 16 each, Sir F. Johnston and Mr. Stephens 14 apiece, and there were several owners of smaller studs.

On one day on which there was but little scent, hounds found a fox but soon came to a check. One of the whippers-in, however, viewed him a field or two ahead, and cap in hand holloaed on the hounds, riding on meantime in the fox's wake. The hounds, however, were a long time in coming on. The sight of the galloping whipper-in was quite sufficient to cause the field to begin to gallop too, and on they came, some before the hounds and some after them. In this fashion they went for about a mile, and then Will Derry, who was carrying the horn in the absence of Mountford, who was laid up, arrived with the hounds, giving some hearty curses to the men who had ridden on in advance of the pack; whereupon Lord Alvanley is reported to have exclaimed, "Curse these infernal hounds! they always spoil sport; what a capital hunt we should have had if it had not been for them." A historian of the time wrote that he saw the members of the Quorn field after a run, and that it would have puzzled a stranger to know the colour of their coats, they were so completely bedaubed from the number of falls; "but," continues the writer, "I never saw fellows mind them so little."

That Sir Harry Goodricke did not mind riding a rough horse, the following anecdote proves:—

"A friend of mine was standing one day in the yard at Melton when Sir Harry's horse came in with his

groom on him. He was a great big thoroughbred one, but there was something sulky-looking about his head. Sir Harry had ridden him during the first part of the day, and his appearance was such as to make my friend inquire if he often came home in that state? A person standing by said, 'Not often so bad as that, but I remember being in the yard on one day when Sir Harry rode in on the same horse and in much the same state, and on my remarking it he said, "Yes, old" (I forget the horse's name) "has been at his old tricks again; he has been eleven times on his head to-day.'" The writer then moralised: "Now when you consider that this gallant horseman could have the pick of the best horses, money being no object, it does seem strange that he should ride such a vicious brute; but he has nerve enough for anything. This horse was a capital hunter when he was in the humour."

Sir Harry Goodricke, whose liberality and kindly manner endeared him to all, had, since his accession to the mastership, so completely thrown his whole heart and soul into hunting the country, and had expressed himself as desirous of making so many improvements, that the era of short masterships which had so prevailed since the death of Mr. Meynell was regarded as over. Had all been well, these expectations would doubtless have been verified; but shortly after the close of the season 1832-33 there came over the Quorn country what was rightly called "a thundering blow to fox-hunting," that thundering blow being nothing less than the unexpected death of Sir Harry Goodricke. He was one of those happy men for whom each season as it came round presented an attraction. When the hounds had met for the last time in England, it was his custom to go to his estate in Ireland, where he indulged in otter-hunting (of which sport he was passionately fond), until the grouse-shooting in August called him to Scotland, where he remained



until it was time to shoot partridges on his Yorkshire property, and after a short sojourn there he came south for hunting again. At the close of the season 1832-33 Sir Harry went as usual to Ireland for otter-hunting, caught a bad cold, and was dead in forty-eight hours. His body was brought over to Yorkshire, and was interred in the family vault at Ribston on Wednesday the 4th of September 1833; while about the same time there died his great friend and fellow-sportsman, Lord Plymouth, a hard-riding follower of the Quorn, who, like Sir Harry, was cut off in the prime of life.

## MR. HOLYOAKE GOODRICKE

1833-1835

SOME of the estates were entailed in favour of the members of the Clermont family; but nearly all the property over which Sir H. Goodricke had a power of disposal, including the horses, hounds, and all chattels, he left to his schoolfellow and life-long friend, Mr. Francis Lyttelton Holyoake, who was probably as much surprised as was the rest of the world at the turn things had taken. Mr. Holyoake married Miss Payne, of Sulby Abbey, a sister of the late Mr. George Payne, of racing renown, and twice master of the Pytchley hounds. Mr. Holyoake at once made himself responsible for the carrying on of the hounds during the approaching season, but as his health did not then permit of his being out himself, the management was delegated to Mr. Greene, of Rolleston, and the pack was to be out four days a week.

Mr. Holyoake, who was the eldest son of Mr. Francis Holyoake, of Tettenhall, was at one time about the hardest and fastest man over a country for a short time that Leicestershire had ever seen—in fact, the manner in which he would gallop and jump, especially when mounted on Baronet, his favourite horse, sometimes led him into the indiscretion of overriding hounds.

The season 1833-34 necessarily opened amid somewhat mournful surroundings, for there was no one who did not sincerely lament the death of the late master. There was, however, one ludicrous circumstance in con-

nection with Mr. Holyoake's first season. Some one from Nottingham went out with the Quorn from Bunny Park and went with the hounds when they drew Deepdale, where they found a fox which was eventually lost. At Kinoulton stone pits the hounds flushed a woodcock, which was marked down by the gentleman in question, whose love for shooting was apparently greater than his keenness for hunting. Having marked down the bird, he remarked to some one near him, "That woodcock shall be mine in a short time," and he was as good as his word. He left the hounds, rode back a mile, put up his horse, borrowed a gun which had been loaded for a couple of months, returned on foot to the place where he had marked down the woodcock, flushed him, and with a masterly shot carried out his previously announced intention of making him his own. He then walked back for his horse, picked up the hounds again, and, as the *Nottingham Journal* said, "finished the day's diversion like a true British sportsman."

Monday the 17th February 1834 saw Mr. Holyoake Goodricke's hounds—he had by that time taken the name of Goodricke, and was subsequently made a baronet—at Brooksby, where a capital run came off from Cream Gorse. Hounds settled down at once, running very fast for Ashby Pasture and Thorpe Trussells, and then to the left to Burrough Hill, through Little Dalby plantation, and thence for Leesthorpe, running to Jericho Lodge, and to the right of Bury Gorse, and near to Stapleford. The fox then crossed the river Eye and the Oakham Canal, and leaving Brentingby on the left, passed Treeby Village and went on through Treeby Wood, Waltham Thorns, and Newman's Covert up to Garthorpe Spinneys to the left of Sproxton Thorns, and so to Buckminster Park, "where two gentlemen of the Hunt scaled the park wall and were up at the death of the gallant fox, after a run of two hours and a half." The distance was

said to be twenty-two miles, and George Mountford, the huntsman, came in for great kudos for the manner in which he handled his hounds during what must have been a tolerably fast run ; for Lady Wilton, riding a thoroughbred horse, could get no further than within two miles of Buckminster Park, and the only members of the field up at the finish were Mr. Holyoake Goodricke, Lord Kinnaird, Lord Wilton, and Lord Macdonald—all Meltonians ; the last-named was riding his favourite grey Peruvian, whose turn generally came when a run longer than usual was brought off.

During Mr. Holyoake's mastership—I ought perhaps to call him Mr. Holyoake Goodricke—the Quorn Hunt lost a good sportsman in Mr. James Ellar, of Wymeswold, who, beginning his hunting career in the days of Mr. Meynell, strenuously preserved foxes and bred good hunters up to the day of his death, which occurred in August 1834, while his hospitality was extended to every hunting man whose road home lay by his house. Mr. Ellar was apparently very fortunate in his horse-breeding experience. Some of the best of the Quorn stud came from his stable ; Mr. Delmé Radcliffe bought one or two for George IV., while he generally sold one a year for a large sum to Lord Clanwilliam. As a *raconteur* of the chase he was unrivalled, his wonderful memory enabling him to recall every famous run and every man, horse, and hound which figured in them. When he first began to hunt there was scarcely a fence or drain in Leicestershire ; and on one occasion he remarked to Lord Robert Grosvenor, in the course of a gallop, "My lord, you and I were both in the long run from this spot forty-eight years ago, when we had seven horses stone blind." In a very famous run of five hours and a quarter, for so long talked about, he was one of the three survivors. In Mr. Ellar's early days "bleeding" the youngsters was a recognised custom, on the glories of which he would

dilate freely at his own fireside. This rite was solemnised after a good run ending with a kill, "when," as he affirmed, "all the colts were obliged to offer up a bowl of punch as a libation to Diana, stirring it with the victim's pad"—a truly nasty operation.

Like many another good sportsman who lived to a ripe old age—Mr. Ellar was seventy-two when he died—he was forced to exchange the saddle for wheels, and his intimate knowledge of the country enabled him to see a good deal of the sport. In the month of January before his death a fox was found in Munday's Gorse, and Mr. Ellar was the first to view him away. He stood up in his gig and gave a right good halloa, which quickly brought hounds on the line. At that moment up rode Colonel Cheney, a Waterloo man, and so delighted was he to see an old brother sportsman that he grasped Mr. Ellar's hand with considerable fervour. Whether it was owing to the warmth of handshaking, the restiveness of Colonel Cheney's horse, or the fact that Mr. Ellar forgot that he was not in the saddle is not known; but at any rate the gig turned over, and Mr. Ellar was underneath. Although the fox had gone away, a number of men remained behind to extricate the veteran sportsman from his dangerous position, and one and all were delighted to hear him exclaim from under his vehicle, "Zounds, colonel, if you charge me so again, you will send me to Davy's locker, as you did those French Invincibles." The victim was happily unhurt, and when he again met the hounds a few days later he came in for quite a shower of congratulations.

Mr. Ellar had, however, one foible. By virtue of being about the oldest member of the Hunt, he considered that he always had the right to be noticed in the field, and if at any time he considered that he had been slighted in this respect by any one, he immediately turned his horse's head towards home, declaring that his

coverts should be cut up, the foxes sent to Belvoir, and that no Meltonian should ever again set foot in his house. Yet somehow or other the next fixture saw him in his accustomed place. Some fancied slight of this kind caused, after years of intimacy, an estrangement between Mr. Ellar and Lord Rancliffe; but the latter, on hearing that the old sportsman was ill, stopped his carriage at his door, sent in a quantity of hothouse grapes, peaches, and other things, and begged once more to shake the old sportsman by the hand. Gladly did Mr. Ellar accede to the request, and the meeting affected him greatly.

In the course of the season 1834-35 the rumour that Mr. Holyoake would resign the hounds was not long in receiving confirmation, and it was reported that Lord Kinnaird would take them, and give £3000 towards the expenses, provided the country made up the rest, but in this case there was a chance of the pack reverting to its old name—the Quorn. Indeed, during Mr. Holyoake Goodricke's last season he took a subscription, Lord Kinnaird being one of his greatest supporters.

The first day of the season (1834-35) took place as usual at Kirby Gate, but the September and October had been so dry that it was scarcely safe to ride when the regular season began. The cub-hunting time had brought with it only moderate success, and at Kirby Gate the muster was unusually small, though just afterwards some welcome rain fell, when sport very materially revived.

When runners were invented we know not, but at this time they were well-known appendages to most hunts, and one contributor to a local newspaper, who had previously advocated the publication of accounts of good runs, wrote to that paper drawing attention to the fact that J. Buttress, of Skeffington, who was well known to old Meltonians on account of his having for many

years done a good deal of the earth-stopping for the Quorn and Cottesmore, and run with the hounds, was too deserving a character to be left out of notice while others were being mentioned. Buttress appears to have been one of the best as well as the most popular of his calling. It was said that he stopped more earths, opened more gates, directed more men on their way home than any other man in the county of Leicestershire; and there is some reason to believe that he made a very tidy living out of it, although, at the same time, the amount of exertion of running four, five, and six days a week should have sufficed to gain more than a competence at any trade which he might have been capable of following.

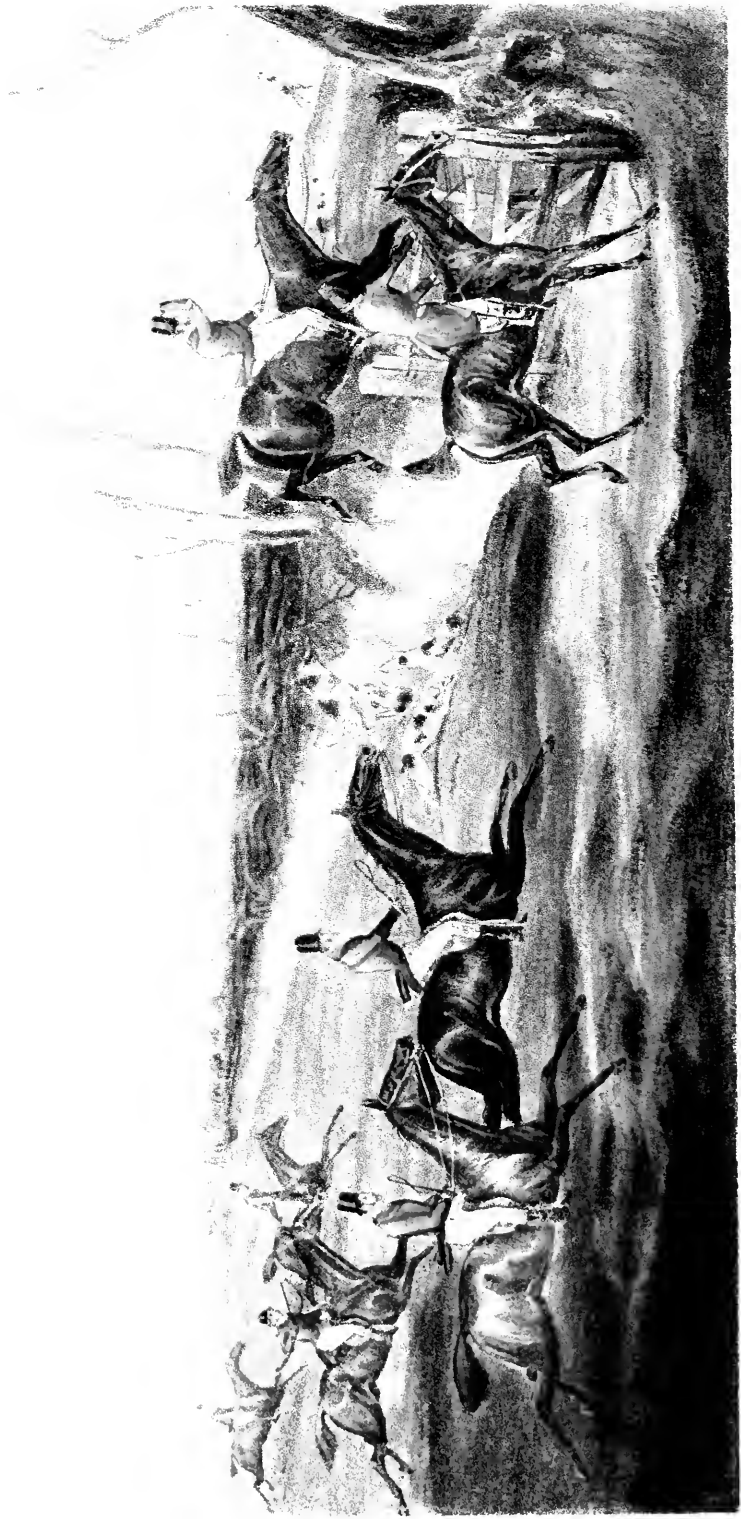
In April 1835 the Meltonian hounds (as they were called), then still in the hands of Mr. Holyoake, met by invitation at Belvoir Castle, where an enormous field assembled. It was quite a function. At noon the Duke of Rutland's carriage, drawn by four horses with postillions, drew up at the fixture, but the sport does not appear to have been very grand, as might be supposed from the time of year. It is true three hours' hunting resulted in the death of a couple of foxes, but the hounds were very little in the open, and the third fox found saved his brush. Among those present were Namick Pasha and his secretary, the pair appearing to enjoy the novel surroundings very much. They managed to be in at the death we are told, but, as already stated, this hardly involved any very great display of horsemanship. Lord and Lady Chesterfield, Lord E. Wortley, Lord Granby, Lord R. Manners, and Lord Rokeby were also present; while among the spectators who were content to follow on wheels was Madame Cardoro, the cantatrice, who had broken her journey from York to stay at Belvoir Castle, where after dinner she "delighted all the large party of distinguished persons by singing." This was about the last of the season 1834-35, and

at its close Mr. Holyoake Goodricke resigned the hounds.

During Mr. Holyoake Goodricke's last season the hounds had a good run from Lowesby Hall, where lived the Marquis of Waterford and some friends. A Russian fox, said to have been one of those imported by Mr. White, was found in John o' Gaunt covert, and he gave a capital run of thirty-nine minutes without a check; and by great exaggeration the distance is said to have been ten miles, when the "Czar," as the Russian fox was called, squatted in a furrow, and the whole pack passed over him; but he was killed just afterwards. Lord Waterford went from start to finish as hard as he could pelt, and killed his first horse Lancet at the end of a racing twenty minutes. For the first time in his life he refused a fence. Lord Waterford jumped off to see what was the matter, and in a few minutes the horse was *in extremis*. "It was not the value of the horse that I cared about," said the marquis, "but the loss of time." A critic of the time wrote that it was a pity there was not a little more discretion mixed up with his lordship's valour.

Sir Holyoake Goodricke, as he then was, died at the close of 1865, and one of his biographers—one who did not always observe the precept *De mortuis*, &c.—wrote: "It must have been many years since Sir Francis Goodricke put on a red coat; and 'blazer' as he was for five-and-twenty minutes, there never was one atom of real sporting blood in him. How a cool hand like Sir Harry could ever have made him his heir, even in a huff, and expected him to carry on the Quorn hounds, passes all belief. The most unfortunate part of the business was, that the gentleman to whom the estates were left by the first will was informed after Sir Harry's death that he was the heir, and then a second will turned up. For a calculating head, nothing beat Mr. Holyoake in





Mr. Osbaldeston.

Mr. Holyoake

Capt. Ross.

Mr. White.

Snob.

'SNOB' IS BEAT. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



his young days, and old Meltonians talk yet of seeing him come dashing up to the covert-side in his phaeton, when he had barely £800 a year, and compare it with the humble style of Lord Plymouth, who had such abundance. That Mr. Holyoake was no sportsman unfortunately appears to be true. He owned an estate in Warwickshire, and when he went down there the first question he asked the old keeper was, "How many foxes have you killed?" adding, "I won't have them here;" and the old man used to pull some pads out of his pocket and show them; but it is to be hoped that the same trophies did duty on several occasions. This I have on the very best authority, and there is no doubt at all that Mr. Holyoake, though tremendously down upon any one in Leicestershire whose coverts were drawn blank, was not much of a sportsman at heart. Nor is his an isolated case, for I have known of a master of hounds who would not tolerate foxes in a neighbouring country where he had shooting; while another well-known individual who wrote on sport would not preserve foxes because he said that his was not a hunting country, yet hounds regularly draw his coverts.

Although Mr. Holyoake Goodricke was not esteemed much of a sportsman, he is said to have been courteous in the field, and to have "blown up" only one man, and that was a farmer for riding over wheat; but he was soon set right by the farmer's reply, "I am sure Master Holyoake is the last person to be offended this year" (1835).

## MR. ROWLAND ERRINGTON

1835—1838

AS already mentioned, the sudden and untimely death of Sir Harry Goodricke was a sad blow to the Quorn country, and as Mr. Francis Holyoake had succeeded to so large a portion of Sir Harry's fortune, he could do no less, unwell though he was, than keep up the Hunt, at least until things had settled down. After his two seasons had expired, he resigned the Quorn country into the hands of Mr. Rowland Errington, a good sportsman, and in every way an estimable gentleman.

He was born a Stanley — at Hooton in Cheshire ; and in his veins there flowed some of the bluest and oldest blood in that pleasant county. His father was Sir Thomas Massey Stanley, the ninth baronet. The subject of this chapter inherited when quite a boy the extensive estates of Mr. Henry Errington, his maternal grand-uncle, whose name he took. The father of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Rowland Errington was closely allied with the turf, and it may be remembered that such horses as Picaroon, Apothecary, and Gasparoni are found mentioned in connection with his name, when the Hooton colours were so often to the front. Mr. Rowland Errington, however, was by choice a hunting man, and as master carried on the Quorn hounds up to their highest traditions, while in his younger days few could beat him over a country.

He succeeded to the baronetcy in the year 1863, and

was in his turn succeeded in the title by his brother, Mr. John Massey Stanley, who, in partnership with Sir Joseph Hawley, used to run a few racehorses in Italy during their visit to Florence. Sir William, the next baronet, however, sold the Hooton estate, and so severed the connection of centuries of the house of Stanley with the county of Cheshire.

It was at the expiration of the season 1834-35 that Mr. Errington announced his willingness to hunt the country, and no sooner was his intention made known than he was invited to the inevitable dinner, which at that time was given to each master who undertook the onus of government. It is said that more than a hundred farmers were present at the function, many of them being considerable freeholders, as well as large occupiers of land. Mr. Burgess of Clipstone, Nottinghamshire, who hunted his own barriers when he was not out with the Quorn, presided at the feast, and in very excellent fashion did he appear to discharge his duties, for a few days afterwards, on some one asking how the affair had passed off, the reply was, "Capitally. Such a chairman! Made nearly all the speeches; gave all the cheers; drank four bottles of wine, and walked away sober." What higher praise could be awarded to a chairman of the old school?

In connection with Mr. Errington's mastership of the Quorn, it should be mentioned that that gentleman was the means of bringing out the afterwards famous huntsman Charles Payne, whose first acquaintance with hounds was riding Mr. Errington's second horse; but he entered that gentleman's service before he took the mastership. Through the good offices of George Beers he was made whip to the Oakley, where he stayed for ten years, after which he went as first whipper-in and kennel huntsman to the Pytchley, over which his namesake Mr. George Payne of Sulby presided. On

Lord Althorpe succeeding Mr. Payne, Charles Payne was promoted to the huntsman's place, and began that brilliant career which never ceased until he resigned the post of huntsman to Sir Watkin Wynn in 1883. He left the Pytchley and went to Wynnstay in 1865, when "merry" John Walker retired from Sir Watkin's service.

In Mr. Errington's time they must have begun cub-hunting pretty early, as we find it chronicled that the hounds were not out cub-hunting till August 31. During his first November sport was almost uniformly bad, but a little later on—that is to say, about the middle of December—the hounds met at Widmerpool, when a very small field joined them, not more than twenty, it is said. After a somewhat unsatisfactory morning, a fox was found in Ellar's Gorse; he ran towards Wymeswold, and after a check went as hard as he could to Ragdale House and Schoby Scholes; passed at the bottom of Lord Aylesford's Gorse, and eventually ran to ground in the Belvoir country, after a capital hunting run of two hours, which showed that the hounds could work as well as the slowest pack in the kingdom.

Mr. Errington had his hounds divided into three packs—the dogs, the bitches, and the mixed pack; but the bitches were generally the favourites. Although the master might not have had the best of luck at the opening of his first season, he did better towards its close, some very excellent runs taking place in March and April. On one day in March they met at Lowesby, found at John o' Gaunt's, and ran on, making something like a twelve-mile point, which was said to have been done in little more than one hour and thirty-five minutes; while in April there took place from Botany Bay a run that knocked up almost every horse out; Mountford, the huntsman, was unluckily injured by falling at a fence which scarcely anybody cleared.

Before the season closed hounds had a slow hunting run from Mr. Cradock's Gorse, but except that they had a good forty minutes, the run was only remarkable for the fact that although the fox had half-an-hour's start of the hounds, Sir David Baird, one of the characters of the Hunt, jumped the Melton Brook, "by way of amusement," for there was a bridge less than a hundred yards off, and the hounds had checked. Lord Waterford and Mr. A. Paget got in, and the former, who was nothing if not thoroughgoing, had a second shot at the brook with the same result; and he was in the water so long that people thought he would surely be drowned, for his horse had his feet on his chest. When he did reach the surface it was found that he had lost his hat and both his stirrups, and when at last his horse was recovered, his lordship trotted in a rather sad state of mind back to Melton.

It was about this time (1836) that the Duke of Wellington paid a visit to Leicestershire, and is said to have given it the flattering appellation of the "nursery of valour," a phrase which would seem to be merely a replica of the statement that the battle of Waterloo was won in the Eton playing-fields, a saying which has often been contradicted.

In Mr. Errington's time as now, Leicestershire was nothing if not sociable, and although previous masters may have done their best towards hunting the country, there was one matter which they all appeared to have neglected, and that was the Hunt ball. We learn that for years it had been a subject of complaint and dissatisfaction in the county that no such function had been established annually; and Mr. Errington no sooner learned that there existed a feeling of discontent on this point than, with his usual promptitude and liberality, he began to devise means for organising a satisfactory dance. He saw that if the thing was to be done at

all it should be done well ; so in the year 1836, being assisted by a band of willing workers, a ball was brought off at the Assembly Rooms, Leicester. The arrangements were excellent ; the supper is said to have been splendid, and Weippert's full band was in attendance. So even in those days hunting men did not get all they wanted round about the neighbourhood. Lord Wilton, Messrs. E. B. Hartopp and E. B. Farnham lent valuable assistance to the master of the Quorn ; and Lord Wilton, in proposing Mr. Errington's health after supper, spoke of him as "a friend, a gentleman, and a public character."

The season of 1836-37 was an improvement on that which had preceded. Since Lord Southampton had bought the Oakley hounds, neither the pack nor the staff had undergone any alteration. George Mountford was still huntsman, Will Derry was first whipper-in, and George Beers second. The last-named left in 1836 to become huntsman to Mr. Musters in Nottinghamshire ; and he was replaced by Tom Ball, who had formerly whipped in under Mr. Grantley Berkeley, and with Mr. Wilkins in Northamptonshire when that gentleman hunted the Pytchley country.

The season of 1837-38 was somewhat brilliant, good runs, both in cub-hunting and during the season of regular hunting, coming thick and fast ; while there was an abundant supply of foxes, an improvement on matters in the previous years. Mr. Errington by this time had announced his intention of living at Melton, and it was during this season, probably early in 1838, that Mr. (afterwards Sir) Francis Grant was deputed by him to paint the picture of the "Melton Hunt Breakfast." Hunting pictures in the open air had been plentiful enough ; as one critic said, "there were few mansions whose walls were not adorned by 'hunting pieces,' in which sundry elderly gentlemen in grotesque-looking



habiliments, jack-boots and ruffles, are seen quietly ambling up the hillside, preceded or followed by several hounds." It was not, perhaps, until the present century dawned that hunting pictures attracted the serious notice of painters, and perhaps the connecting-link between the old and newer schools was the painting of the celebrated Billesdon Coplow run, formerly in the possession of Sir Thomas Parkyns, of Bunny, and afterwards in that of Mr. Rowland Errington, of Hooton. It was said to have been a very life-like picture. Mr. Errington's picture, though, was something of a new departure, for it represented no incident in the hunting field but a breakfast at Melton, and on the canvas were depicted eleven of the best sportsmen then known in Leicestershire. The artist was most successful in grouping his figures. The time is evidently not up for starting, and the fixture is at Billesdon. Mr. Arthur Stanley (the elder brother of Mr. Errington), Lord Wilton, Count Matuscewitz, Lord Gardner, Mr. Lyne Stephens, Sir Frederick Johnstone, Lord Rokeby, Lord Forester, Lord Kinnaird, and Mr. Rowland Errington are the characters in the picture, while the waiter is he of the George Inn, Melton, and his was said to be the best likeness in the painting.

One of the criticisms passed upon the painting at the time was that there was not a single Irishman in it, and this was thought to be an oversight, inasmuch as Mr. Errington enjoyed the friendship of a great many Irishmen. Nor, was it remarked, was there any fox-hunter of the old school, such men as Mr. Moore, Sir James Musgrave, and Val Maher being altogether passed over.

In the April of 1838, shortly before Mr. Errington gave up the hounds, there was given at Drury Lane an extravaganza called "The Meltonians," a production which the playbills termed "an original, good-humoured, and per-

factly illegitimate drama." It was written by Mr. Peake, and had long been in rehearsal, but owing to an accident to Mr. Anderson, one of the chief performers, and the superior attraction of Mr. Charles Kean, it was reserved for Easter, for at that time a novelty of some sort was produced at Easter as regularly as was a pantomime at Christmas. It was said to illustrate the doings of a certain young nobleman, in whom the reader will recognise the high-spirited Lord Waterford, whose frolics and eccentricities gained so much notoriety, not only in Melton Mowbray but elsewhere. Most people had seen pictures of Melton, in which Lord Waterford was represented painting the toll-bar house a scarlet as bright as that of his own coat, while his collection of door-knockers from Melton and other places was said to be the largest in the world. The characters in the play chiefly consisted of about a dozen Meltonians, and it is said that their persons and characters and habits were brought into strong and striking contrast with those of a couple of Frenchmen and the family of a retired merchant-tailor. The success, however, of the piece depended upon some tableaux which were given, and which represented the exploits of Lord Waterford. The subjects there represented were three: first, "Larking at the Toll-gate; or, Coming in for the Brush;" second, "Taking a Five-barred Gate in the Drawing-room;" third, "Quick Work without a Contract by Tip-top Sawyers." The second was said to be the best. The five-barred gate was put up in the stage drawing-room, and a horse, having more the appearance of a hunter than anything generally seen upon the stage, was brought in and made to take the leap very cleverly. This reminds one of a play produced in London, representing some incidents in Shropshire, when the Salopians went up to London to show the theatrical people how a view halloa should be given; while it is also rather suggestive of "Formosa," a

play produced by Mr. Boucicault many years ago, and which was supposed to represent incidents in the training of an Oxford crew during their stay in town.

In reference to the closing days of Mr. Errington's mastership, there appeared in one of the local papers an extract from *Blackwood's Magazine* from Mr. Gardiner's "Music and Friends." The author, Mr. William Gardiner, was one of the house of Gardiner & Sons, hosiers and stocking-makers, and he wrote as follows :—

Our time passed pleasantly enough, and from the description my friend gave of the delights of the chase in Leicestershire, they determined to pay a visit to our green fields during the following season. In November the champions arrived with horses, grooms, and lackeys. Finding that I was no hunter they expressed great surprise at my want of taste, and insisted upon mounting me upon one of their steeds, and that I should see for the first time in my life something of the sports of the field. I so far consented as to accompany them to covert, to witness the sight of throwing off; but I was cautious not to join in the chase. I was mounted on a delightful creature, who, with an elevated crest, was gazing round the country, like a giraffe, as we gently rode to Carlton Clump. On arriving there, the high-mettled steeds were walked about by spruce and cunning grooms waiting their masters' arrival. Soon as mounted, the phalanx of scarlet began to canter from covert to covert, surmounting the hedgerows by easy leaps. This mightily pleased me. The cry of the dogs and the agreeable motion made me forget the company I was in; and just as I was about to return, up started a fox, when my resolution availed me nothing, for my horse, which had playfully scampered over the green turf just before, shot like an arrow from a bow and headlong we went—

O'er hill and dale,  
O'er park and pale,

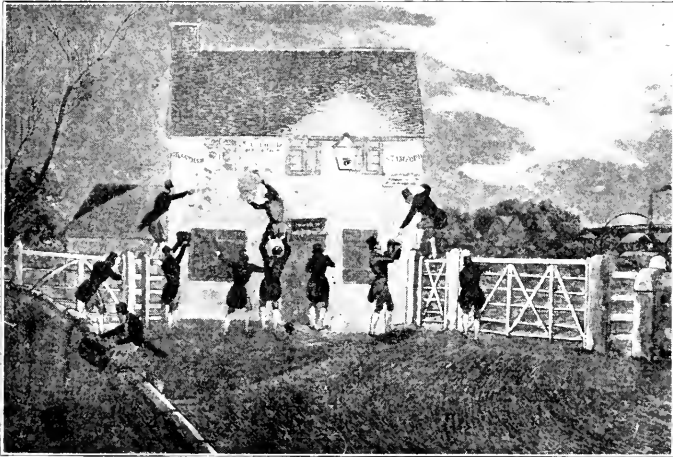
till we came to Hallaton Wood. Here sly reynard concealed himself, and we were at fault. During the interval every eye was upon the covert. I was asked by Sir Thomas Clarges, on which side the wood I thought the fox would break? I replied, "My dear sir, it is the first day I ever saw a pack of hounds."

Upon which the celebrated Mr. Mellish exclaimed, "Where the h—ll, sir, were you born?" However, just as my reason had returned and I was about to quit the field, up sprang another fox and we were off again like the wind. Near Uppingham we hurried down a declivity at full gallop, which I have since considered the maddest action of my life. Helter-skelter we then rushed forward to Launde, where reynard met his death. The impetuous creature upon which I was, mad with heat and sport, by way of a finish, plunged over head and ears with me into a gravel pit filled with water. We swam out on the other side, and by the time I had ridden the eighteen miles back to Leicester my ardour for fox-hunting was completely cooled.

It is perhaps as well to read accounts of hunting from all points of view, and in connection with another dictum of hunting, it may be said that it was Valentine Maher, a famous fox-hunter, who for twenty-five years passed his winters at Melton, who said that it was better fun to ride to and from covert in Leicestershire than to hunt in any other part of the kingdom. This saying, by the way, has been attributed to Whyte-Melville, but inasmuch as it appeared in print in 1839, it is tolerably obvious that it became a saying before Whyte-Melville was given to the utterance of epigrams.

The season of 1837-38 was Mr. Errington's last, and a farewell dinner was given to him at Leicester. About a hundred and twenty hunting men were present most of those at the chief table being in scarlet. Mr. E. C. Hartopp took the chair, and the company included the Duke of Beaufort, the Marquis of Hastings, the Earls of Wilton and Chesterfield, Count Batthyany, Lords Rancliffe, Gardner, Clanwilliam, Macdonald, Eglinton, Castlereagh, Joscelyn, Dunmore, and others. It seems to have been hoped that, when Mr. Errington determined to give up the country, the Duke of Beaufort would have taken it; but as he hunted his own pack, which had been in that family for a good many years, it

was hardly likely that he would abandon it to take a strange country. Mr. Errington could not be induced to reconsider his decision, and eventually Lord Chesterfield bought the Quorn hounds, wherewith to hunt the Pytchley country, which he had just taken.





## CHAPTER VI

LORD SUFFIELD (1838-1839)

MR. THOMAS HODGSON (1839-1841)





## CHAPTER VI

### LORD SUFFIELD

1838-1839

LORD SUFFIELD, as soon as it was understood that he would succeed Mr. Errington in the mastership of the Quorn hounds, was described as "a nobleman unknown as a fox-hunter." This description is perhaps scarcely accurate; for, although he was but five-and-twenty years of age (having been born in 1813) when he entered upon the Quorn country, he had hunted with Mr. Errington, and had proved himself a bold horseman. Edward Vernon Harbord succeeded to the title in 1835, on the death of his father, who was killed in London by a fall from his hack, and the son came into an income of £14,000 a year. After leaving school he went up to Christ Church, Oxford, where he remained for a short time only, and then, like his predecessors Lord Foley and Mr. Osbaldeston, took to racing, which eventually ruined him, as it had been the cause of their downfall. A contemporary wrote of him:—

His lordship since his *début* on the turf has been fortunate in purchasing some good horses, among which we may mention Newlight, not particularly splendid; Alfred, that is to be great; and Caravan, which could not go quite fast enough for the Derby. Had Caravan won this race (1837) his lordship would have pocketed an immense sum.

Passing mention must be made of the Derby of 1837, because it bore directly upon Lord Suffield's lamentable failure as M.F.H. In Caravan he thought that he had a

smart horse, and backed him for pounds, shillings, and pence. Lord Berners<sup>1</sup> had a horse named Phosphorus, but he suffered so much from a disease in the feet that no one deemed his chance worth thinking about : he had not had a gallop for ten days, and on the eve of the race his trainer went to Lord Berners, and pointing out the horse's condition, asked what was to be done on the morrow ; was the horse to run ? Lord Berners, a quaint, strong-minded old man—he was seventy-seven years of age at the time—was not given to long speeches, so he merely said, "Run ? I always run," adding that Phosphorus would have to go if he broke down in half-a-dozen strides from the start. There were a couple of breaks away before the flag fell, and after a punishing finish, Phosphorus beat Caravan by half a length, and the defeat of the latter cost Lord Suffield a pretty penny.

It was not long after this crushing loss that Lord Suffield, undismayed by his liabilities, decided to offer himself as Mr. Errington's successor ; but perhaps he would not have been quite so readily accepted by the country, had there not been some idea that Lord Gardner, his brother-in-law, and a magnificent horseman,<sup>2</sup> was to be a sort of sleeping partner in the concern ; this idea, however, turned out to be quite erroneous, as Lord Gardner, though a constant follower of the hounds, at no time had any share in the management, though Mr. Bernal Osborne, the author of the "Chaunt of Achilles," perhaps entertained a different idea, judging at least from the following extract from the above-named publication :—

But lo ! where following on his chestnut dark,  
The grinning Gardner gallops down the Park ;  
Slow in the senate, tho' not wanting sense,  
Quick in retort, but quicker at a fence ;

<sup>1</sup> Lord Berners was much interested in the breeding of Hereford cattle

<sup>2</sup> It was said that Lord Suffield would have shown to greater advantage over a country had he not been eclipsed by his brother-in-law.

With him no hunter ever dare refuse ;  
 His hand so perfect, damnable his muse !<sup>1</sup>  
 Strange, tho' for years I've listened to the crowd  
 Who canvass character, the rich, and proud,  
 Of him alone, as yet I never heard  
 One kindly action or approving word ;  
 Sparing of cash, he ne'er outruns his bounds,  
 And Suffield keeps, whilst Gardner hunts the hounds.

At the time of his taking the country, Lord Suffield had neither hounds nor huntsman. Mr. Ralph Lambton, who in his early days had hunted in Leicestershire before succeeding his brother in the mastership of the family pack, gave up his hounds just as Lord Suffield was in want of a pack, and then after some little difficulty the new master bought them for the considerable sum of 3000 guineas. Sir Matthew White Ridley, master of the Blagdon Hunt in Northumberland, wanted the Lambton hounds for his country, but he gave way, and they became the property of Lord Suffield.

It is worthy of note that not long before they left Durham "Nimrod" paid them a visit, and wrote of them in highly eulogistic terms, making especial mention of the fact that they were extremely steady from riot.

Another circumstance occurred which created a smile. Whilst picking out a cold scent in the middle of a rough grass-field, all the pack being at work, a brace of hares jumped up in view ; not a hound noticed them, on which I heard Mr. Lambton say : " I hope the Professor ('Nimrod') saw that." I did see it, and I agree with Lord Kintore that any wild animal jumping up in view of hounds in a moment of disappointment and baffle, such as this was, puts their steadiness from riot to the test, and if unnoticed confirms it.

Lord Suffield, together with his brother-in-law Lord Gardner, took Lowesby Hall, which had previously been occupied by the Marquis of Waterford and Lord Gledynde, and celebrated as the scene of the Marquis's *res*

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* his rhymes in the "Book of Beauty."

*geste*, such as riding up and down the marble staircase, and leaping Cock Robin over chairs and tables in the drawing-room.<sup>1</sup>

When, however, the hounds arrived in Leicestershire they were "crabbed" by nearly every one, though Treadwell, the huntsman who brought them from the Sedgfield country into Leicestershire, declared that they wanted no hunting. In spite of a crippled purse, Lord Suffield began his career regardless of expense. His stables were filled with the best horses to be procured for money—or credit; he built new kennels at Billesdon, at a cost of £4500; he approached the farmers and landowners in a very conciliatory spirit, and to those who were unaware of his pecuniary embarrassments his term of mastership promised to be successful enough.

Lord Suffield expressed himself as determined to show sport,<sup>2</sup> and, resolving that the farmers should be gainers rather than losers by the presence of the Quorn Hunt, declared that he would pay all damage and spoil, and would buy his forage, &c., direct from the farmers instead of from the dealers. How far he was enabled to carry out his good intentions the following anecdote will show:—

Upon one occasion his lordship complained to his stud-groom of the want of condition in his horses.

"I can't help it," was the brief and somewhat surly reply.

"Can't help it?" repeated his lordship, surprise portrayed in every feature; "and why not?"

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<sup>1</sup> During one of the meetings of the Royal Hunt Club at Aylesbury, the Marquis of Waterford had his horse brought upstairs to the dining-room at the White Hart; and a grey of Charlie Symonds's is said there to have jumped the dinner-table; he was ridden over it by Mr. Manning, a sporting farmer. See "Echoes of Old Country Life," by J. K. Fowler.

<sup>2</sup> When Lord Suffield first took the country, it was thought that he showed a tendency to baulking the people who came out on foot, so a foremost member of the Hunt begged him to do nothing of the kind, as if he did the disappointed pedestrians would be sure to kill foxes by way of retaliation.

"Because I ain't got no corn," added the stud-groom.

"Immediately apply to the steward, then," said his master angrily.

"I did, my lord, this morning," replied the man; "but he told me it was no use coming to him, as the corn-dealer would stand tick no longer."

"That's an unpleasant circumstance," said his lordship reflectively.

"Yes, and so I said at the time, my lord," returned the servant; "but he said he couldn't help it—that none of the tradespeople would give any more credit, except the pastry-cook."

"D—— it! if that's the case, feed your horses *on jelly*," replied his master, after a pause for the hatching of a remedy.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Suffield's fixture on the 5th November 1838<sup>2</sup> was not productive of much sport, and is only mentioned on account of the following incident:—

The first thing that they noticed was that the beautiful and well-known ash-tree, long standing in majestic solitude on an artificial tumulus—for half a century the trysting-place of the Hunt—had been victimised by the late storm. There it lay, once the admiration of all beholders—the pride of the park—the tree which Meynell had climbed to see the finale of a run, when his steed could travel no farther.

Before leaving the year 1838, it may be as well to make reference to a letter written by "A Leicestershire Farmer and Fox-hunter" to the *Leicester Journal*, if only to show how history repeats itself. The writer of the letter suggested that, instead of the members of the Quorn Hunt giving £60, as usual, to be run for at Leicester, it would be better to give it in one, two, or three prizes for the best young horses calculated to make hunters; to be *bonâ fide* the property of farmers in the Quorn country. The reasons given were that many non-hunt-

<sup>1</sup> The anecdote is in a book called "The Sporting Life of England," by John Mills, author of "The Flyers of the Hunt," "Life of a Foxhound," &c.

<sup>2</sup> In the year 1838 died Mr. John Cradock, who succeeded his father as secretary to the Hunt. More will be said about the Cradock family later on.

ing farmers have their land crossed and breed horses ; those who did hunt liked to have a horse to carry them well, but did not care to encounter the trouble and expense of putting the horse into training ; and that the stakes were, more often than not, won not by a hunter but by some thoroughbred screw worth not more than £25, and which could not get over a country at all. The writer further suggested that if the premiums he suggested were given, the non-hunting as well as the hunting farmer would stand the chance of being benefited. It is curious to find that the lines proposed sixty years ago by a farmer have been adopted by the Royal Agricultural and Hunters' Improvement Societies, as well as by most agricultural societies and promoters of horse shows.

We learn very little about the sport of Lord Suffield's hounds during November and December 1838. His hounds were said to be slack drawers and as slow as a man in boots, until one fine day when there chanced to be something like a scent.

A fox was found in Shearsby Gorse ; the hounds went away on good terms with him ; left the hard-riding field behind at every stride ; and, after having the fun all to themselves for three-quarters of an hour over the Gumley country, rolled over their fox and ate him up, "brush and all," without a man being within two fields of them. At Gumley the leading men were in absolute ignorance of their whereabouts, and had it not been for Mr. Tilbury (the well-known dealer in hunters), whose quick eye espied a couple of labourers running in the distance to the left, it is possible that no one might have seen them again. Tilbury, however, making an excuse that he had lost a shoe, pulled up for a moment, and when the rest of the field had ridden aimlessly on for some distance, the astute old dealer turned away and galloped as hard as he could to the left, where he had seen the labourers running, followed by one person only, to whom he had given a hint of what was going to happen, and none but these two could give any account of what had taken place during the last ten minutes. "Hounds ran mute from start to finish, and old Tilbury made the most of what little he did see."

Towards the close of Lord Suffield's first and only season (1838-39), that is to say, in the month of March 1839, the hounds met at Kirby Gate and made ample atonement for any previous shortcomings, if they ever existed, by bringing off one of the best runs Leicestershire had ever seen.

Cream Gorse was the starting-point, and away went the fox towards Melton, afterwards bearing to the right to Great Dalby and pointing for Gartree, hounds running at a tremendous pace, again without any one with them. After the fox had run through the end of the covert and up the hill to Little Dalby, he went away over Burrough Hill to within a few fields of Somerby, and thence he ran almost straight to John o' Gaunt's, into which covert the fox ran in view of the racing pack; but, as may be supposed, the hounds were not in view of more than a very few of the large field of the morning. After dwelling a short time in covert, this good fox went away on the Tilton side for Lowesby Hall, which he succeeded in reaching just in time to find safety in a drain. Lords Gardner, Waterford, and Wilton, Mr. Stuart Wortley, Mr. Little Gilmour, and Sir James Musgrave, though some way from hounds, were the nearest to them, while Treadwell, the huntsman, was in a good position all through.

The run was estimated at about fourteen miles, and the time a little over an hour; but either time or distance, or both, must certainly be wrong. Luck favoured the Quorn during the week in which the above run took place, as two other capital gallops were enjoyed, and then people began to think that there was something in the Lambton hounds after all.

As the season was rapidly drawing to a close, Lord Suffield announced his intention of resigning the Quorn country at once, a statement which was regretted by a good many and caused surprise to some, while others wondered how it was that a man who was in such pecuniary difficulties as was Lord Suffield could ever have dreamed of becoming master of so expensive a hunt.

Mrs. Musters, in her most interesting little work,

entitled "Hunting Songs and Sport," says that the hounds and horses were seized by the bailiffs while on the way to meet at Lodge on the Wolds; but the writer has been unable to verify this statement or to find it said elsewhere. There is also an account of how the hounds were sent to London by train and driven from the station to their town quarters in carts—two couples in a cart—a sight which caused great excitement among the cockneys, as well it might. The writer has not been able to verify this either.

It has always been said that Mr. Robertson, who hunted a country in Northumberland, gave a thousand guineas for the hounds which cost Lord Suffield thrice that sum; but in the *Sporting Magazine* for May 1839 it is stated that on the 25th April Lord Suffield's hounds, carriages, and horses were sold at the "Corner" by Messrs. Tattersall and realised the sum of £5859, 4s. The yard was crammed on that occasion. Some of the horses brought long prices—Grantham, 285 guineas; Metternich, 275 guineas; Cigar, 225 guineas; Mount-eagle, 210 guineas; Bryan O'Lynn, 210 guineas. Then comes the statement that "the hounds for which Lord Suffield had given 3000 guineas were sold in eight lots, and produced 491 guineas," a very different story from the 1000 guineas Mr. Robertson was reported to have given for them. Nevertheless it appears tolerably certain that the hounds did go north, though at what price it was impossible to say. No surprise need be felt, however, if the true state of the case be that the pack brought only a comparatively small sum. The original amount of 3000 guineas was at the time thought to be somewhat extravagant, especially as there was quite a full complement of old hounds which could not be expected to last more than another season or two; and as Lord Suffield, not much of a hound man, had them for a single season only, it stands pretty well to reason



that he could have done nothing to bring about any improvement. Lord Suffield went abroad immediately after his resignation.

Just before he went out of office, however, a meeting of the owners of coverts was held at the Three Crowns, Leicester, at which it was agreed by Lord Wilton, as representative of Melton, that Lord Hastings (master of the Donington hounds) should draw Prestwold. It was also agreed that the Quorn coverts should be managed by a county committee, who should pay the rent and charges for damage, an arrangement which was calculated to save the next master about £2000 a year. Those who lived beyond the confines of Melton hoped very sincerely that the resolution would be carried, as during several previous masterships the idea had prevailed that the Melton clique had had too much to say to the conduct of affairs, and that the country had not been hunted quite fairly. With the retirement then of Lord Suffield, the thirteenth master of the Quorn, including Mr. Boothby, there came to an end a reign which can only be regarded as more or less of a failure.

## MR. THOMAS HODGSON

1839-1841

THE retirement of Lord Suffield was so sudden, and apparently so unexpected, that at the time of his withdrawal no provision whatever seems to have been made for the future hunting of the country. The names of sundry gentlemen who were likely to come forward were mentioned, but nothing was done; and a good many of the farmers who were not excessively predisposed to hunting took the opportunity of destroying a great number of foxes, the coverts on the Laughton Hills and some on Charnwood Forest being amongst those which suffered. After a long interval, however, it was announced that Mr. Thomas Hodgson, who had shown good sport in Yorkshire, when master of the Holderness, would come south and take the Quorn country.

That the Hunt was not particularly well off for funds may be gathered from the fact that the Melton committee at once, on Lord Suffield's retirement, gave Tom Ball,<sup>1</sup> the second whipper-in, notice to quit, as it was

<sup>1</sup> Ball, luckily for himself, left the Quorn with Treadwell and the hounds, when the latter were sold to Mr. Robertson. His first situation was in his native county of Bedfordshire, under Mr. Grantley Berkeley; then he came to the Quorn under Lord Suffield; and upon the hounds being sold he went for one season to the North. Then he took service with Baron Rothschild and whipped in to Bill Roffey, and afterwards for two seasons to William Berwick. He was somewhat of a failure as a huntsman, and it was in the duties of a whipper-in that he chiefly excelled. He was a consummate horseman, and no one could beat him over the Vale of Aylesbury, while no horse appeared to pull with him.

suggested that his continued engagement would involve the payment of wages, and the authorities did not feel themselves rich enough to become liable for so serious a responsibility.

Mr. Hodgson's advent was hailed with acclamation, for his reputation in Holderness had been very great, and no sooner was it known that he had consented to hunt the Quorn country than the Holderness farmers at once announced their intention of presenting him with a testimonial; and in 1840 he had to journey north to Driffield, where a dinner was given to him, at which many members of the Holderness Hunt attended, and a handsome though small service of plate was presented to Mr. Hodgson, the gift having been purchased by funds raised by the farmers alone. He took his Holderness hounds to Leicestershire, where in due course they gave a good deal of satisfaction.

Between his establishment and Lord Suffield's, however, there was a most extraordinary difference. In Lord Suffield's time, says a writer of the period, there was lavish waste in every department, infinitely more attention being paid to a smart turn-out than to the sport which ensued. The morning's show was brilliant, the performances afterwards were voted wretched. In Mr. Hodgson's establishment, however, everything was said to be business-like, without parade or nonsense, giving promise, which appears to have been kept, of famous runs equalling those of the olden times.

Webb had been Mr. Hodgson's huntsman in Holderness for at least part of the time that the latter hunted the country, but learned a good deal of his business under Mr. Conyers, in Essex, with whom he remained thirteen years, and then went to the Pytchley under Mr. Payne. He was accounted a good man in Yorkshire, was a bold horseman, and the widest and deepest of Holderness dykes had no terrors for him,

while he was also an excellent man in the kennel. But Yorkshire and Leicestershire differ widely in their requirements, and when Webb came into the shires, "Nimrod," who happened to be down there at the time, voted him slow, and other people taking up the cry, Mr. Hodgson drafted him and took on Tom Day in his stead.

Mr. Hodgson's new huntsman (Day) had a long and varied career with hounds. He is said to have begun life with a sporting farmer who kept some harriers in Notts or Lincolnshire; thence he went as second whipper-in to Mr. Foljambe and Lord Scarborough, remaining with the latter master three years. He was born in 1798, and, as he went to Lord Scarborough when about eighteen years old, he would have left him about the year 1819. It is then said that he went as whipper-in to Mr. Osbaldeston, who was at that time at Quorn, and after a short stay with the Squire he was engaged to Sir George Sitwell as huntsman, and then when he gave up his pack Tom Day went to whip in to Assheton Smith in the Tedworth country, where he remained for about three seasons. His next place was as whipper-in under old Will Boxall with the Warwickshire, and on Boxall's retirement he was appointed huntsman, and from all accounts he hunted the Warwickshire for about five or six years. At the beginning of the season 1840-41, we find Tom Day as huntsman to the Quorn under Mr. Hodgson, he being at that time forty-two years of age and "decidedly turning grey." In the Quorn country he remained for no fewer than eighteen seasons, acting as huntsman for Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Greene, and Sir Richard Sutton; and then when the Quorn country was divided Mr. Tailby took him on, authorised him to get a pack of hounds together, which he did, and he hunted them for one season, at the expiration of which he quietly settled down in the village of Quorn, where he lived till he died at the beginning of 1878.

Nature, it would seem, had built Tom Day on the lines of a jockey; he is said to have ridden but a few pounds or so over eight stone; he was a fine horseman with beautiful hands, thoroughly understood his business, was very popular, and was, as one of Mr. Hodgson's followers said, "very intelligent and the best-mannered person we have had here for some time." While Tom Day was huntsman to the Quorn he had his full share of falls, but escaped all injury; yet his death was hastened by a fall

downstairs owing to failing eyesight, and it is a curious coincidence that on the day of his death the hounds were advertised to meet at Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, and they were due to meet at the same place on the day of Sir Richard Sutton's death.

Webb, however, it is only fair to say, was badly mounted for Leicestershire, and this fact his master readily admitted, for no sooner had Webb left than Day found fault with the horses, and nearly all were sold to be replaced by others more suited to the country. Webb, however, in spite of his bad horses crossed the country in an extraordinary manner, and even "Nimrod" admitted that in his knowledge of the run of a fox he had no superior. On the whole, therefore, Webb seems to have been a little badly treated, and of course his premature departure from the Quorn annihilated his chance of a testimonial.

When he hunted his Yorkshire pack, Mr. Hodgson was said to ride, but when he came to Leicestershire his critics said he never rode a yard, the reason given by one writer being that

He was in love all the time he was master of the Quorn, and had special injunctions from his lady fair—if he was not under a vow—never to jeopardise those precious long limbs of his by riding at timber. Yet what glorious sport did he show us. With him hunting was indeed a science, and his lagging habit was often of more real service in the field than the go-ahead hard riding of masters who hunt for riding's sake and nothing else.

Another critic said that Mr. Hodgson was a capital whipper-in, and was of far more use in keeping the field in order when somewhat near the rear rank, than he would have been in the front. But this, I fancy, may be something of a libel, for there seems every reason to believe that, although Mr. Hodgson had not the dash of Osbaldeston or Assheton Smith, he yet rode very

fairly over a country. It is of course well known that he rode in a brown coat, and a pair of tanned leather knee-caps. The reason he is said to have given for the colour of his coat is, that as he had hunted his hounds before in Yorkshire, he should not like them to see him in scarlet when he was not hunting them. This, however, is probably only a fable, because Webb certainly hunted his hounds for him in Holderness.

During Mr. Hodgson's second season, when of course the Donington country was in existence, there appear to have been some neutral coverts, and one day Lord Hastings and Mr. Hodgson clashed in their appointments, each having arranged to meet at Bunny Park. Mr. Hodgson met the marquis before the day appointed, when, each offering to withdraw, it was agreed instead that each should bring ten couples of hounds, which should hunt together, the merits of each pack to be decided upon by some disinterested party. This friendly trial, however, never came off, as a frost intervened, and put a stop to hunting altogether.

As already mentioned, Mr. Hodgson was exceedingly successful during his short mastership in showing sport, and in January 1840, meeting at Bardon Hill, after a poorish morning, hounds found a good fox in the Outwoods.

The fox was soon viewed away, going as though over the Beacon Hill, but then headed back, going on straight through the Outwoods, and crossing the Loughborough Road, as if for Garendon. He then changed his course, bearing to his right, as if he would go to Loughborough, and again turning to the right he crossed the road at Loughborough town end. Going on at a killing pace he crossed Beaumanor, through the coverts, not delaying a moment, but setting his head straight for Quorn Wood, with the pack close at his brush. Running in view for three or four fields the hounds eventually killed him on the road, within a few hundred yards of Quorn, after an exceedingly fast thirty-five minutes, during which the hounds ran away from the horses.

This run, it should be said, as well as some other good ones, took place before Webb left Mr. Hodgson.

Lord Gardner was one of Mr. Hodgson's constant attendants, as he had been of his predecessor's, and was noted for the fineness of his hands, and the boldness of his horsemanship. On Thursday, December 3, 1840, however, when the hounds met at Keythorpe, Lord Gardner sustained a very bad fall at Knowsley Brook, and it might have been attended with very serious consequences. He rather liked water, and riding hard up to the brook, at one of the widest parts, his horse slipped back and fell on him. He was carried off in an insensible condition to Mr. Greene's house at Rolleston, but it was not for a day or two that he could be moved to his own residence.

On another occasion hounds again met at Keythorpe, and after an uninteresting morning with a ring fox found about two o'clock at Shangton Holt. In the course of the run a particularly formidable stake-and-bound hedge came in the way, and the only two to face it were Jem Mason and Dick Webster, the latter of whom may be remembered as often riding horses at the London horse shows. Both landed up to their girths in a bog, but managed to get out, though Jem Mason afterwards came to grief at the Stanton Brook. Not more than half-a-dozen rode at it, but Jem picked out one of the worst places, where the banks were hollow, and being once immersed had to stay there till some men with spades dug an exit for him. It was on this occasion, when, finding at Shangton Holt, two foxes going away almost immediately, and the field being anxious to do the same, that Mr. Hodgson, being on the exact spot, just waved his hand, and said, "I beg and pray, gentlemen, you will stand still, or the hounds will never get away." "To keep a field in order like that," said one of those who were out, "was more than the

‘Squire’ or Assheton Smith could do with all their bullyragging.”

It was early in 1840, that is to say, before the end of Mr. Hodgson’s first season, that Dick Christian made his celebrated leap, mentioned by “The Druid,” on Mr. Coke’s chestnut mare Marigold, while out near Holwell Mouth.

He rode at a thick cut hedge four feet six inches high, which he cleared easily enough, the mare alighting on a bank about a yard wide, with all her four feet nearly together. Directly below this bank was a steep declivity into an old quarry, called Sot’s Hole. It was said to be about twelve yards deep. The failure of the bank where Dick had thus suddenly deposited his whole capital must have proved fatal. Luckily it stood firmly, and the mare bounded boldly forward, reaching the bottom in three springs. Dick found himself well fixed in the saddle when the mare reached *terra firma*, and both steed and rider were perfectly unscathed. Dick is now sixty. The first leap was 18 feet, the second 10 feet 6 inches, the third 10 feet, the fourth 14 feet 9 inches; total, 53 feet 3 inches.

It was probably owing to the interregnum which ensued between the resignation of Lord Suffield and the coming forward of Mr. Hodgson, that caused Melton to be so comparatively empty during the latter’s first season. When the opening day came round and the hounds met at Kirby Gate, scarcely any old faces were present, but the master was subsequently well repaid when people came to know of the sport he was showing, though in some parts of the country he was rather short of foxes; while Lord Harborough, whose father had kept hounds, closed Stapleford Park against hunting men, and not only that, but had dog-spears set all over the place, which would have played havoc with any pack that happened to find their way inside the demesne.

It has been already mentioned how urbane Mr. Hodgson was; but he had very decided views of his



own, and would stand no interference from anybody. On one occasion the hounds met at Kirby Gate, and after drawing Cream Gorse,

Found at Ashby Pasture. Hounds crossed over a very strong country, by Kirby Gate, almost to Melton. Lord Wilton and Mr. Smith both had severe falls, and Lord Gardner, upon the hounds coming to a check, took upon himself the office of huntsman, and, cap in hand, proceeded to cast the hounds. As Day, the professional huntsman, was well up, this was a little too much even for Mr. Hodgson's proverbial good nature, and he very quietly informed the noble peer that he could not allow any such interference from anybody, greatly to the gratification of a very large field. Were Lord Gardner aware of his own unpopularity in Leicestershire, we think he would not get into so many scrapes, as nothing gives the people there more pleasure than seeing his lordship in a mess.

It was during Mr. Hodgson's mastership that Mr. Assheton Smith (who at that time hunted the Tedworth), after paying a visit with his hounds to Sir Richard Sutton in the Burton country, passed through the Midlands, and Mr. Hodgson accorded him a meet at Rolleston, where something like two thousand horsemen were gathered together. The old master of the Quorn accepted Mr. Hodgson's offer with the greatest delight, and Friday, April 20th, was appointed, Mr. Greene's house at Rolleston being the fixture. Among the large field was Prince Ernest of Saxe-Coburg, brother of the Prince Consort. The Leicestershire farmers at once spotted his hunting-whip, which had a gold stag for a handle, and which, after the buckhorns and the iron-hammered whips then in vogue, could not fail to arrest the attention of the spectators.

A writer of the time says that his Serene Highness took umbrage at the fact of the farmers not paying him that deference to which he was accustomed in his Principality of Saxe-Coburg. He therefore made some

rather unwise remarks about farmers being allowed to hunt, a remark which amused the Leicestershire people immensely, and is certainly not on all-fours with the cut-and-dried statements one hears at puppy shows and elsewhere, and the universally admitted fact that farmers are the backbone of hunting. The Rolleston meet, however, more resembled a Derby Day than a hunting fixture. Coaches and carriages came pouring in from all directions, and seventeen hundred people are said to have passed through one gate alone; while another division, which in itself would have constituted a large field, took another route. About one-third of the whole field were in pink, and the majority of the horses were certainly entitled to be called hunters, though of course a good many rough specimens were pressed into service for the occasion.

Dick Burton was on the lawn, surrounded by his hounds and a number of horsemen, and when Mr. Smith appeared he was most warmly greeted, none giving him a more hearty welcome than his old friends the farmers. The hounds, it was seen, had lost none of their high standard. They were very handsome, and possessed considerable family likeness.

The unlucky Prince Ernest did not make his appearance until twelve o'clock, a circumstance which caused some delay, as Mr. Smith waited for him. His lateness, however, did not surprise those who had heard that on arriving at Lord Cardigan's house a few days before, four hours after the time fixed for dinner, he insisted upon having a warm bath before he joined the half-famished party awaiting his august presence. He is said first of all to have glanced at the hounds, expressed his astonishment at such a multitude of people coming to look at *him*, when, in point of fact, writes one of those who were present, not one-third knew he was there at all, and not one in twenty that he was expected. He then



Mr. Osbaldson.

Mr. Hovock.

Mr. Webb.

Capt. Barkley.

Dick Christian.

Sir F. Biddell.

Lord Altonley.

Lord Goring.

FULL-CRY, SECOND HORSES. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



retired to Mr. Greene's for a little needful refreshment. It was about half-past twelve when Mr. Smith

Went to Shangton Holt, drawing the bottom of the covert only, and then trotted away to Norton Gorse, Mr. Greene's covert, which was also blank. Stanton Wood was tenantless, so were Gorleston Wood and Fallow Close; Voysey's covert near Hallaton was apparently blank, and Mr. Hodgson was so disgusted at the bad luck which attended the day, that he dismounted, and walking into a part of the covert where there was some very good lying, flogged a fox out himself. Hounds showed plenty of dash; the fox was soon out of covert, and went away towards Horninghold. Leaving it to the left, he went over some new rails, out of the road, into Mr. Ouseley's farm. This was rather an awkward sort of place. Mr. Smith cleared these rails, as he would have done in his younger days, and having landed on the other side, laughed heartily at some of the falls which took place there. Then the line lay across the Bradleys to Easton Park, where the fox was lost; but it was afterwards ascertained that he had crossed the Welland and gone by Rockingham Park.

Prince Ernest, it appears, was mounted on a horse drafted from Mr. Hodgson's stud, and the rider, not being accustomed to go from covert to covert at the rate of something like ten miles an hour, got his horse across the road, and was nearly knocked over by somebody who was riding close behind him. "Do you know whom you rode against?" asked a friend of the offender. "Not I," was the reply, "but I wish the fellow would stay at home, for he has nearly broken my leg." Then, again, in the course of the run the Prince, going for a fence, crossed a farmer who meant taking it almost at the same place, but pulling up his horse the latter went a little to the right, saying very energetically, as he passed the Great Unknown, "D—n you, sir, why don't you keep your line?" The Prince, rather upset by the farmer's energetic words, rode up to Lord Cardigan at the first check to inquire, and doubtless received a satisfactory explanation; but the Prince must have gone away somewhat impressed with the curious deportment of the English farmer, the backbone of fox-hunting. This was a kind of festival week, as on the following day Lord Cardigan turned out a deer at Glooston Wood for the amusement of his visitors.

The weather had become so hot that the foxhounds could do but little, so the Marquis of Waterford, who

had in the meantime purchased the staghounds from Mr. Villebois out of Norfolk, showed a good deal of sport around Melton. They had a famous run just afterwards, of one hour and fifty minutes. The marquis was riding a horse called Dusty Bob, for whom he had a few days before given 350 guineas. He rode him on this occasion for the first time, with the result that Dusty Bob gave his master three rattling falls during the afternoon, and died the next day. The distance from Little Dalby to Sykes's Spinney, the two extreme points, was eleven miles as the crow flies. A few days later the staghounds ran a drag from Asfordby to the kennels at Melton, and some practical joker managed to gain possession of the drag, which he ran through the streets; and great was the surprise of the inhabitants to see the hounds rushing along on a scent, when they had seen no animal go by!

During the last week in March the Quorn met at Widmerpool, and in going from Parson's Thorns to the Curate's Gorse, a gate was found which could not be opened. Mr. White led over, and was followed by fifteen men in succession without a mistake. One of those who cleared it was a ponderous German baron, an *attaché* in the suite of Prince Ernest, attired in scarlet coat and blue trousers. It was said that one of his friends had managed to find him a pair of leathers, but no boots were forthcoming into which the baron's legs could be forced, so he substituted his own blue trousers. He expressed himself very well satisfied with the country, and enjoyed his ride extremely.

The season terminated with a week's hunting in Charnwood Forest, in which fair sport was enjoyed, and the Quornites were cheered by the intelligence that during the following season Mr. Hodgson would hunt five days a week; his huntsman to go out on three days in the open country, he himself hunting another pack

two days a week in the forest and among the woodlands. Mr. Little Gilmour at this period determined to retire from Leicestershire, and the Marquis of Waterford, after making Melton and other parts of Leicestershire ring with his exploits, announced his intention of henceforward hunting in Ireland.

Soon after the close of the season 1839-40, there died in Leicestershire Mr. Rowland, the veterinary surgeon, who for something like half a century had enjoyed an enormous practice among the owners of the better class of steeds, and it was said that no man could better keep a "screw" sound, or cure a horse which had met with an accident. His memory was for many years affectionately cherished in Leicestershire, from the fact that he brought about, if not a revolution, at least a reform in the shoeing of horses. Before his time prickings in shoeing were so common that it came almost to be regarded as a matter of course in one horse out of about three. Mr. Rowland, however, insisting on greater caution, asked for a slightly improved rate of remuneration, and in due time induced all the local farriers to take more pains, with the result that pricking became almost as rare as it is now.

Firing Mr. Rowland disliked, but when he used the irons, he used them, as Sir Harry Goodricke once said, "with such judgment and effect that rendered their application rather ornamental than otherwise." His zeal for his business appears to have been as great as his love for hunting, for it is said that he had been known to ride fifty miles to see patients, meet the Quorn hounds, change his horse, and then take another long journey on professional rounds. The story goes that one day Lord Suffield despatched Mr. Rowland to see a lame horse of his which was lying out somewhere near Birmingham, and on seeing him at the covert-side, reproached him for having neglected his professional duties

for the sake of pleasure. Great, however, was his astonishment on being told, "I saw your horse at five o'clock this morning, got him on his legs again, and have since ridden nearly sixty miles, and I hope to ride as many more to-day with your lordship." He remembered Mr. Meynell and the Meynellites, and he had enjoyed the confidence of almost every master of the Quorn.

Mr. Hodgson's hounds showed some excellent sport during the season of 1840-41, although frost put a stop to a good deal of hunting; but this, on the whole, was a benefit, as for some reason or other there was a great deal of disease among horses in Leicestershire, especially in Melton, during the season, and the affection is said to have been analogous to pink-eye, which has ravaged stables in later times. The concluding months of the season were extremely favourable, and Mr. Hodgson closed his career as master of the Quorn on Wednesday, March 31st, by meeting at Kirby Gate.

There were only a very few people out, not more than a dozen, among them being Mr. Assheton Smith, Lord Forester, and Goosey, the huntsman to the Belvoir. The first fox was found at Gartree Hill, and gave a very fast run to Stapleford Park, where they were stopped, the time being twenty-five minutes. Then crossing the Wreake a fox was found at Sir Harry's Gorse, near Sysonby, crossed the Melton and Nottingham road near Melton Lodge, and went north by Waltham. Eventually he ran to ground, and was killed one hour and forty minutes after the time of finding.

Early in the year 1841 Mr. Hodgson decided to resign, a determination which surprised a good many of the Leicestershire hunting men, but the fact is that the country did not suit him. Among the dykes of the East Riding he had been accustomed to see these hounds, of which he was so fond, hunt a fox by themselves with scarcely any interference, while the Holderness



sportsmen gave them plenty of room on the occurrence of a check. He essayed something of the same style in Leicestershire, and great was his mortification on finding his hounds overridden day after day; and it was with regret that he saw his huntsman, Tom Day, forced to adopt quicker tactics, more in accordance with the style of hunting in vogue in Leicestershire. It was said that his resignation was due to some action on the part of a section of the farmers, but that statement is incorrect, as with that body he was a great favourite. His departure from the country was partly due to the above-mentioned circumstances, and also to reasons of a private nature.

He next went into the provincial countries again, and was made Registrar; and in his office the son of many a huntsman found a fruitful berth. Before he left Leicestershire he held a sale, which was freely attended, and both horses and hounds realised more than was expected. The bitch pack was bought for 1000 guineas by Lord Ducie, who was then hunting the Vale of White Horse country. The first lot, ten couples of dog hounds, produced no more than 200 guineas, and were bought by Mr. Greene. The next lot were bought in by Mr. Hodgson at 490 guineas, while the outgoing master also bought in another lot and a few of the best bitches. The rest of the hounds were bought by Mr. Greene and Lord Waterford, the latter of whom came by train from London on the morning of the sale. The aggregate sum produced by the whole fifty-seven couples of working hounds, fifteen couples of young hounds, ready to enter, and six brood bitches, was 2201 guineas. This sum, of course, includes those bought in by Mr. Hodgson, but the hounds which changed hands produced something over 1700 guineas. Mr. Hodgson went away with a very good small pack in his possession; but his buying-in of the hounds occasioned some little dissatisfaction, and when he offered the country for 650 guineas, the lot

which he had bought in for 490 guineas, the irritation was scarcely allayed. The horses are said to have realised thrice the money they would have brought had they been sold at Hyde Park Corner, the total being 1000 guineas, which, considering the amount of work they had performed, and that they had had no rest, must be considered as a very good return. The best were bought by Mr. Greene and Mr. Swan, of York, on behalf of the York and Ainsty Hunt; while among the masters of hounds present were Lord Ducie, the Marquis of Waterford, Mr. Applethwaite, Tom Smith of the Pytchley, and the master of the York and Ainsty.

In 1878 there was exhibited at the galleries of Messrs. Dickenson and Foster, New Bond Street, London, a collection of pictures entitled "Two Centuries of Hunting," among the collection being a portrait of Mr. Tom Hodgson.

The subscription list, too, is said to have been rather a sore point with the retiring master, considering the number of people who came out with the hounds. It is believed that he received something like £3000, which was more than was given to Lord Southampton, yet not so much as was received by Sir Bellingham Graham. It was estimated that no man could at that time hunt the Quorn country under £4000 a year, while many of the previous masters, who went in for something like show, had to spend a good deal more than that.

The year 1863 saw the death of three veteran sportsmen in Yorkshire, viz., Sir Tatton Sykes, Mr. Gully, and Mr. Hodgson, at the respective ages of eighty, ninety, and seventy. Mr. Hodgson himself became master of the Badsworth Hunt at the age of twenty-four, when Sir Bellingham Graham resigned, and found, as he expressed it, "twelve couples of hounds and three horses as a nest-egg." After three seasons with the Badsworth, he became master of the Holderness for

sixteen, and of the Quorn for two seasons. Then for about a season and a half he hunted his old Yorkshire country, which he finally quitted in 1843, and this brought him to about the age of fifty.

As already mentioned, he was head of the poll by thirty-two for the West Riding Registrarship at Leeds, after a tremendous contest (in which 3393 people polled) with one of the Lascelles family, and, patronising hunting blood, huntsmen's sons found seats in his office. His friends used to ask him in chaff whether he chose them for their handwriting, or whether he merely looked to their backs, ribs, legs, and feet.

After he returned to Yorkshire he seldom if ever spoke of the Quorn, or if he did, he soon went back to Holderness and its foxes again. He occasionally went to the hound shows, and was always seen on the Doncaster stand or on the drag of some hunting friend beside the course at York. At the Doncaster meeting before his death he looked uncommonly well, but he told a friend of his of the death of his old brood-mare Eclogue, and added, "It is an omen for me"—and so it proved.



## CHAPTER VII

MR. HENRY GREENE, OF ROLLESTON

(1841-1847)



## CHAPTER VII

### MR. HENRY GREENE, OF ROLLESTON

1841-1847

THE accession of Mr. Greene, of Rolleston, to office as master of the Quorn is remarkable from the fact that he was the only Leicestershire man since Mr. Boothby who had occupied that position. In many countries, a little prior to Mr. Greene's advent to power, hounds were kept by county men in many cases, and even now (1898), where there has been a change of mastership there has sometimes been a clamour for a county man instead of a stranger.

No better choice could have been made than Mr. Greene, for he had been a constant follower of the hounds and could get over a country in good style, was popular with the farmers, and of course knew the district. There is some doubt, however, whether he was an actual master, or whether he was merely an acting master under a committee; at any rate, his position was often referred to as though it were at the head of a committee, or its representative. It may be remembered that during Lord Suffield's mastership mention was made of a suggestion for a committee which should pay the rent of coverts and damages. This committee was no doubt elected, and one would rather be inclined to think that it existed in Mr. Greene's time, and that he was possibly more an acting than an irresponsible master accountable to no one.

Mr. Greene, it will be remembered, was a large buyer of hounds at Mr. Hodgson's sale, and before the time for cub-hunting arrived he had in his kennel more than seventy couples of hounds, drawn from a variety of sources. In addition to those he bought from Mr. Hodgson, he had about fourteen couples from Mr. Drake; twelve more from the Atherstone, and twenty from Mr. Foljambe, the remainder being made up from the kennels of Lord Yarborough, the Belvoir, the Vine, and some hounds of the Duke of Beaufort's blood, though whether they came direct from Badminton is a question which cannot be easily settled, nor is it perhaps important to do so. The Hunt servants had twenty horses between them, and Tom Day's opinion was that he had never been better mounted. Day remained on as huntsman, and certainly had all his work cut out to sort and discipline this huge scratch pack. The dog pack, which was perhaps the pick of the kennel, was told off to hunt the Harborough country, while a mixed pack, but consisting chiefly of bitches, was to hunt the remainder of the district.

During the last days of August the hounds came from Quorndon to the Billesdon kennels, built by Lord Suffield, and met for the first time for cub-hunting on Tuesday, August 24, 1841, Rolleston being the fixture. They soon found a fox, and by a curious coincidence he was killed in Mr. Greene's kitchen garden.

The regular season opened on Monday, November 1, Kirby Gate being the fixture. Not for several years had there been so large a field assembled, among those present being Lord Gardner, Count Batthyany, the Hon. W. R. Wilson, Messrs. Hartopp, Farnham, Stirling Crawford, and many others, who were loud in their congratulations to Mr. Greene on the excellence of his establishment. With regard to the hounds, Lord Gardner thought them most promising, while Goosey (the Belvoir



huntsman), who came over to have a look at them, declared that he never saw a pack work better. A fox was found at Cream Gorse and gave a pretty good run for six miles, when he was lost. Barkby Holt was the next draw, but nothing else to speak of resulted during the day.

Melton had filled up very well, but the frost in December sent most of the visitors up to town till hunting was again possible. Meantime a statistician had gone round the stables and discovered that Lord Wilton had seven horses, Lord A. St. Maur (the late Duke of Somerset) eleven, Colonel Wyndham seven, Count Batthyany eleven, Count Moseley twelve, Sir James Musgrave twelve, Mr. Crawford fifteen, Mr. Moore ten, Mr. Surtees ten, Mr. Oliver ten, Mr. White twelve, Mr. Gilmour twelve, and Mr. Cook nine. This was a great falling off from the number of horses kept in olden days, when the studs sometimes amounted to between twenty and thirty, as mentioned in previous chapters. Melton, too, was then hardly what it had been, as many of the followers of the Quorn preferred Leicester on account of its railway convenience.

By judicious heading and tailing Mr. Greene had cut down his seventy couples of hounds to fifty couples of working hounds, and their excellence in drawing, hunting, and running was universally admitted. Mr. Greene rode well up to his hounds, and so of course did Lord Gardner; and as a follower pointed out, it was wonderful how Mr. Greene managed to get along, seeing that he allowed himself five horses only for four days a week, while Lord Gardner had fifteen. Between the style of riding of the two men there was a vast difference, however. Mr. Greene rode with great judgment, never taking a liberty with his horses, but always saving them as far as possible, while Lord Gardner, knowing that he had plenty to fall back upon,

delighted in riding to hounds in a line by himself and going at everything. Like Mr. Assheton Smith, he was quite unhappy if any one cut out the work for him ; but he rode the best of horses, and whether it was plough or pasture he galloped along at the same pace. Mr. Little Gilmour (the Gentle, as he was called), too, was well mounted, and second to no man of his weight ; and then there was Sir James Musgrave, who always held his place in a run ; while Lord Wilton, whose fame has been many times sung, was quite in the first class. But, perhaps, for a heavy man Colonel Wyndham was about the best in the Hunt, for he rode twenty stone, and though unable to cut down the light weights could hold his own. Of Day a contemporary writer spoke in highly complimentary terms. He was said to be always in his place.

On December 9, 1841, the Quorn hounds placed an excellent run to their credit, of which the following is an abstract :—

They met at Great Dalby, and found a fine dog fox at Thorpe Trussells, and from there he ran by Great Dalby, and swinging to the right went towards Burrough by Maresfield, and on to John o' Gaunt, where he bore to the left for Halstead, and with hounds running at a tremendous pace the line lay by Skeffington-highfield, at which point the field were tailing terribly. The fox ran to Tugby Spinney, where he was headed, and a check took place, the time to this point being fifty-two minutes. On Day recovering the line it was found that the fox had turned to the right, in the direction of Rolleston, crossed the covert, round which he ran twice, while some fresh foxes rather complicated matters. Mr. Greene, however, was fortunate in keeping to the line, and as the fox was endeavouring to jump a small brook a hound pulled him down, after one hour and twenty minutes, over as fine a line of country as could be wished for. For the first fifty-two minutes, up to check, and during the last four miles, there was not a horseman within a quarter of a mile of the flying pack, and the run was considered to have been one of the best seen in Leicestershire since the days of Mr. Meynell. At the end of the run not a single hound was missing ; and during the whole day it is said

that the proverbial sheet might have covered them. Day was mute with exultation at what his hounds had done ; while Mr. Greene, who set very high store by his huntsman, in the evening sent Tom Day and the whippers-in a basket of some old wine, which had lain for twenty years in the cellars at Rolleston. The head of the fox was sent to a taxidermist's to be mounted in silver, with an appropriate inscription engraved, to commemorate a run which, it was said, would not be speedily forgotten by those who took part in it.

The last day of the year (1841) was marked by another excellent run.

Meeting at Widmerpool, hounds soon found in Howthorpe plantation, and after some delay in covert, a fox broke in the direction of Cotgrove Gorse, a favourite covert of Mr. Musters's. Skirting the gorse on the right, the fox ran a circle round by the brick-kilns to the Decoy, and after leaving Kinoulton went as though for Howthorpe, and then turned short to the left to Kinoulton Gorse, which he threaded, and went over the Fosse road. He next pointed for Bunny, thence to Kegworth, which he passed on the right, and turned towards Normanton village, leaving that also on the right, and then swung short to the left, as though he would go to Debdale Gorse, a covert which he passed one field to the right. Then he went to Plumtree village, close to the back of the houses, crossed the high-road, and went towards Tollerton Park, where he tried dodging, but the hounds were running at such a tremendous pace that he was not able to stay. In the pond there is a small island, and thither he swam, the pack following his example, and, before he could get away, they pulled him down. Day offered a labouring man half-a-guinea to fetch the fox, but the man, having the fear of cold water and the pack of baying hounds before his eyes, laconically replied, " I dussent." Presently the second whip arrived, and that worthy man made no bones about it, but went on to the island and brought back the fox, his teeth (the whip's, not the fox's) chattering with cold. Colonel Wyndham, who, as usual, was up at the finish, handed the swimmer his flask, with directions to take as much as he liked. This run lasted for one hour and fifty-five minutes, and, considering that these hounds, which were located at Quorn, had not been out for a fortnight, they must have had enough of it, to say nothing of the men who had ridden over thirty-three miles to covert, seen

the run out, and had to ride more than thirty-three miles home. On the grass the pace was fast, but as a good deal of ploughed land lay in the way, the pace, of course, slackened at times. In the absence of Mr. Greene, Day went and found another fox at Round Hill Gorse, whence another very good run ensued for a short time, but scent died away, and the hounds were taken home.

The master of the Quorn began his second season (1842-43) by breaking a rib, the result of his horse having fallen upon him. He was one day hunting before the snow had completely vanished—in fact, in some places it was five feet deep—and while jumping over a set of posts and rails from a bridle-road leading from Holwell Mouth to Kettleby, the horse slipped off a frozen bank, and catching the top rail with his knees, fell and rolled heavily on Mr. Greene. Luckily this was only three miles from Melton, whither he was taken by a friend, and conveyed home in a post-chaise; but the broken rib and the shock kept him out of the saddle for some little time.

Mr. Greene's likeness, by the way, was painted by Mr. William Scott; afterwards engraved in mezzotint, and had a large sale.

How impossible it is to satisfy everybody is seen from a letter which appeared in *Bell's Life* in the year 1842. The writer, apparently a hunting man, being, as he described himself, "upon the shelf," made up for active participation in hunting by reading all that was written on the sport. *Bell's Life* published a great deal of hunting news, amongst it letters from the Quorn country, and this writer took exception to the style of the communications addressed to that once all-powerful sporting paper:—

I read with "satisfaction," certainly not "unmixed," the proceedings of the Quorndon, as frequently detailed by a Leicester correspondent. If that contributor to your sporting intelligence would be less lavish of his fulsome panegyrics on Mr. Greene, and

on the members of the Melton Hunt (as it is called, and is too much so in reality), I should peruse his account of a day's sport with much more pleasure. For my own part, I never could see the merit of a parcel of young dandified Nimrods quartered at Melton, because it is the fashion, joining in an amusement about which they know nothing, and care less; nor the fun of their trying to get a start before the hounds, and nine times out of ten pushing them over the scent, unless it be a burning one, and then not one in fifty of them seeing a yard of the run. Did it never occur to your correspondent that though Mr. Greene may be made for the Melton Hunt, and the Melton Hunt may be everything to Mr. Greene, that the country was not made for either, and will not submit much longer to be humbugged by both, as it has been. It may be all very well to confine the "meets" to the grass country immediately around Melton, or that part of it which is in favour with these aristocratic bucks, exclusively for their amusement, but unless a country is hunted regularly, both rough and smooth, I shall venture to predict, from long experience, that it will either soon cease to be hunted at all, or be subject to mutilation. I am now speaking particularly as to the Widmerpool side, which, in Osbaldeston's time, afforded the best runs of the season, and now is almost neglected. The murmurs are loud in that neighbourhood, and as the adjoining country, late Mr. Musters's, is without hounds, it will very soon be without foxes, unless some spirited individual takes the latter country, and begs for (which he would soon obtain) the Widmerpool side, away from the Quorndon, which, in spite of the support it renders, in the shape of a weekly encomium from Leicester, is in truth going as fast as it can to the dogs.

VENATOR.

This somewhat bitter letter certainly had beneath it a substratum of truth, as for a long time, as mentioned on a former page, it was always said that the Melton clique was all-powerful, and that, so long as they had a sufficiency of fixtures within easy riding distance of their headquarters, they cared nothing about hunting on the rougher side; and this was no doubt true, though perhaps Mr. Greene did his best to free himself from the trammels which had surrounded some of the earlier masters.

During the earlier part of 1843 there was nothing particular to chronicle in the sport, but for the convenience of hunting men a new hunting map of Leicestershire, together with such parts of the adjoining counties as are within easy reach of Leicestershire men, was published by Messrs. Brown & Hewitt, the Bible and Crown, Market Place, Leicester. The map contained all the new coverts, as well as all the bridle-roads; while there was another map of the Quorn, bound in red silk, coloured, and folding up to fit the waistcoat pocket.

If, however, there was no particularly grand sport early in 1843, there was a dastardly attempt to stop hunting in the early part of January, when the hounds met in the south of their country, not far from Lutterworth. Some man, half suspected to be the occupier of a small piece of land in the neighbourhood, caused a number of sharpened stakes to be driven at short intervals into a fence, over which he knew it was likely the field would jump. The sharpened ends were pointed outwards, so that if a horse made a mistake or did not rise enough, it is more than likely that man or horse, or both, would have been impaled.

The late Sir Watkin Wynn made his *début* in Leicestershire towards the close of the year 1842, and his second appearance with the Quorn was on November 18, when hounds met at Widmerpool. The runs enjoyed that day were of no particular excellence, but it is a curious coincidence that on the occasion of Sir Watkin's appearance with the Quorn a second time, the hounds should have run through Wynnstay Gorse, which had been planted forty years before by Sir Watkin's father.

In February 1843 the Quorn had some fair sport. On the 22nd they had a long hunting run of something like three hours from Steward's Hay, while on the following day they had a brilliant burst of twenty

minutes and another of twenty-five minutes; and on the 27th the hounds ran for fifty-five minutes at a great pace. On March 6, Prince George, the present Duke of Cambridge, was out, while on March 21 a capital run from Gartree Hill came to a summary end by the hounds having to stop at Stapleford Park, in which, by the desire of Lord Harborough, were traps innumerable. Lord Harborough, however, does not appear to have been the only person who did not favour fox-hunting, for the story goes that a gentleman in the county made rather extensive plantations on his estate, and was showing them with some pride to a man who happened to have once on a time been a hunt servant. "Them's no good, sir," said the old man. "How do you mean?" asked the owner of the estate. "Why, they won't hold a fox; they are too hollow," rejoined the huntsman. "I did not make them to hold foxes," said the proprietor. "Then what the devil did you make them for?" murmured the old huntsman, turning away with a contemptuous smile. So even at that time fox-hunting had sundry enemies.

Towards the close of the season 1842, the Duc de Nemours and suite came out, and with the second fox they had a run of twenty minutes, which was only just fast enough to give the royal visitor a taste of Leicestershire; and he appears to have enjoyed his run very much, while accounts say that he went very well. In fact, whenever a distinguished foreigner who could boast of any powers of horsemanship at all came to England, he was generally taken into Leicestershire, just as visitors of distinction are now trotted down to the Crystal Palace. A still more enjoyable royal visit, however, was that paid by the Queen to Belvoir and Melton Mowbray in 1843. At the entrance to the latter place a handsome triumphal arch was erected, covered with evergreens and hung with flags, while the

artist into whose hands the decorations were entrusted evidently thought fit to impress upon her Majesty the staple trade of Melton; for standing out against the sky, above the arch, were two stuffed foxes, emblems of Melton as the mainstay of hunting, and on the front was the inscription, "Albert, Prince of Wales, England's hope"—the prince being at that period about two years old; for the time had not arrived for him to don tops and leathers, as he afterwards did in Leicestershire.

The season of 1844-45 was marked by a certain number of accidents, though the number might not perhaps have been very much above the average. Still, among those recorded we find that Lord Canteloupe, who had been staying with Lord Wilton, at Egerton Lodge, Melton Mowbray, was following the Quorn when his horse fell, and his lordship so injured his eye that when he arrived home fears were entertained that the sight was irretrievably gone; but such, however, fortunately did not appear to be the case. A little later on Mr. Knight, one of the old yeomen farmers, and one of the best friends fox-hunting ever had, was sitting at dinner when he heard the hounds in full cry passing his house. He at once started up to follow on foot, but the exertion was too much for him, and he dropped down dead a few yards from his own house.

It will have been seen that the Quorn almost invariably opened their season at Kirby Gate, where was the residence of Sir Francis Burdett, for a comparatively short time one of the most regular followers of the Quorn. Sir Francis's history as a sportsman is rather singular, for as a matter of fact he was almost fifty years of age before he took to hunting. He always mounted himself on the best of cattle, and being ardently fond of the sport and having plenty of courage, got along pretty well. It is related of him that on his return from his first day's hunting he was so charmed with the



amusement that he expressed in the very strongest terms his regret that he should have allowed so many years of his life to have passed by without having, until that very day, had the most distant notion of the pleasures of the chase. He was, in fact, so completely wrapped up in hunting that he went out with the hounds every season, and long after he became feeble he still kept a few hunters. That he, at any rate, acquired some proficiency in the saddle may be inferred from the fact that he was one of those who, after a poor day's sport, preferred to "lark" home across country, instead of taking bridle-roads and lanes. This, if somewhat unsportsmanlike, according to our modern notions, was at any rate a test of pluck. He died on January 23, 1844, at his town residence in St. James's Place, at the age of seventy-four; and it was said that on one occasion, when the hounds met at some favourite fixture, he left London, had a day's hunting, and returned on the day following to town to his Parliamentary duties.

The same year saw the death of another prominent member of the Quorn Hunt, Mr. John Moore, who, together with Mr. Maxse, Mr. Maher, and Sir James Musgrave, made up the four "M's" of the Old Club. Mr. Moore, although not an old man, was almost regarded as the patriarch of Melton and the father of the Quorn, from the number of years he had spent in the county. He first went there in 1811, and missed scarcely a season until the time of his death. When he left, Sir James Musgrave was the only surviving member of the Old Club; while shortly afterwards the Hon. Ottway Cave, who was a member of the Old Club and very popular at Melton, also died.

Considering his bold style of riding, Lord Gardner met with singularly few accidents. On November 22, 1844, after the Quorn had met at Widmerpool Inn.

they found at Parson's Gorse and had a capital forty-five minutes ; but presently changing foxes, they lost. A second fox was found at Ellar's Gorse, and he gave a very fast thirty-five minutes to Cripple's Gorse, where he was also lost ; and it was during this scurry that Lord Gardner had a somewhat serious fall. He was taking a line of his own, and, in his usual style, galloping at a great pace between the fences, when his horse put his foot in a hole and rolled completely over his rider ; but luckily he was not so badly hurt as was at first imagined, for another week or ten days saw him in the saddle again, going as well as ever.

It was somewhere about this time, though the exact date cannot be ascertained, but it was probably either 1844 or 1845, during the mastership of Mr. Greene, that Tom Day, hunting the Quorn hounds, found a fox at Bunny and ran him by Reddington and Plumtree to Tollerton ; and on the same day Mr. Musters found a fox at Edwalton and was running him towards Cotgrove, when either his hounds got on the line of the Quorn run fox, or *vice versa*.

Both packs, however, immediately joined, and with sterns down and up wind ran well together by Clipstone and Normananton, and pulled the fox down in less than ten minutes from the fusion of the two packs, near the Melton turnpike road. It was a curious scene ; the old Squire and Tom Day, of course, each claimed the run fox. They rode side by side, taking their fences almost together, with all the keen ardour which had always possessed them, each recognising and pointing to his favourite hounds ; each riding for the fox as if it was his own, and cheering on his hounds. The finish came soon afterwards. Day jumped off his horse, and went quickly after the fox into the plantation, the Squire keeping as close as he could to Day. The latter seized the fox and exclaimed, "It is my fox, Squire ; I will swear it at the Day of Judgment"—and he strutted along holding it in his hand, the Squire walking at his side, and there was no further wrangling, except by the hounds eating him. Then came another pleasant scene, the Squire and Day drawing, by alternate

calls, their respective hounds, each hound answering to his name directly. All feelings of jealousy were banished, courtesies were exchanged, and each pack departed on its way home.

All hunts have their characters, and the Quorn included one, by name Benjamin Fouldes, a frame-work knitter. In his native village of Woodhouse Eaves, near Loughborough, and indeed beyond the confines of that small place, he had quite a reputation on account of his remarkable zeal for fox-hunting. Whether it was that the propinquity to the kennels gave a sporting turn to the inhabitants of Woodhouse Eaves, or whether they were affected with the sporting proclivities of Leicestershire in general, matters not, but no sooner was it known that the hounds were to meet anywhere near at hand than the whole village turned out in great number, the stockingers leaving their dusty frames for the purer air of Charnwood Forest and its heights. Foremost ever amongst these was Fouldes, who always "hunted in scarlet," and for many years none of the pedestrian followers could beat him. He was well known to nearly all the members of the Hunt, who had a kindly word for him, and often expressed their esteem for him in more tangible form. He had a good deal of ready wit about him, and was a general favourite. He died on March 15, 1846, at the age of seventy-nine. For some reason or other he had always taken a great interest in the future of the Hunt, and when it was rumoured that the country was offered to Sir Richard Sutton, he heard the intelligence with the greatest possible satisfaction, although it was by no means certain that he had ever seen Sir Richard, who was then hunting the Cottesmore country. Be that as it may, however, he to the last expressed his hope that Sir Richard Sutton would hunt the Quorn in succession to Mr. Greene.

In due course old Benjamin Fouldes's wish came to pass; the country was offered to Sir Richard and accepted by him. The hounds and horses belonging to the Quorn were sold at the Billesdon kennels by Mr. Tattersall on March 31, 1847. The kennel comprised about eighty couples of hounds and thirty horses, but the stock did not, however, fetch any very great amount of money. The working hounds brought £479, 17s.; the unentered hounds, £49, 9s.; while the horses realised £1083, 3s.; the total for hounds and horses being £1612, 9s., a very moderate price for a complete Quorn establishment.

Mr. Greene lived till November 7, 1861, when he died somewhat suddenly, his death being a great shock to the neighbourhood. The hounds had met at Rolleston, his residence, for the first time during the season, on the day of his death, and he had, as was his custom, provided a breakfast for any who chose to come, and he appeared to be in good health and spirits. The hounds drew his gorse, about a quarter of a mile from his own house, and found a good fox; he went away in the direction of Skeffington. Mr. Greene had not ridden very much of late, so he quietly galloped on the road towards Skeffington, and on reaching that place he felt ill, and was recommended to take some brandy, which he did, but finding himself no better, turned his horse's head towards home, luckily not more than two miles distant, and dismounted in his own yard, ordering his servant to fetch the doctor. He walked into his dining-room, and in less than ten minutes was dead, the cause being *angina pectoris*. He was about sixty-six years old at the time of his death. Mention has already been made of his riding, which was spoken of in terms of encomium by such thrusters as Assheton Smith and Dick Christian, both of whom admired the manner in which he crossed the country; while Lord Gardner,

who was no flatterer, declared that Mr. Greene was the best master the Quorn ever had. Towards the end of his life he lived a great deal in London, and was very constant in his attendance at Boodle's, where he was one of the foremost authorities on fox-hunting laws, he being one of the Fox-hunting Committee of that club. A very few weeks after his death came the severing of the last link which connected Mr. Greene with the Quorn, except that his memory was long cherished by those who had known him. Rolleston Hall passed into new hands, and just about Christmastide the contents of the house were put up to auction. The natural desire to obtain some memento of so good a sportsman no doubt accounted in part for the good prices realised, while a considerable amount of amusement was caused when a "portrait of a neighbouring nobleman" (probably a former Lord Harborough) was put in at tenpence.





## CHAPTER VIII

SIR RICHARD SUTTON (1847-1856)





## CHAPTER VIII

### SIR RICHARD SUTTON

1847-1856

TRUE indeed is the saying that "when one door shuts another opens." The Quorn men were in mourning for Mr. Greene, the like of whom many of them thought that they would never see again, and the majority were quite unprepared for the good fortune which was in store for them. Sir Richard Sutton, an excellent all-round sportsman and a man of great wealth, had for five years hunted the adjoining Cottesmore country, having taken it after the venerable Earl of Lonsdale; and, on the resignation of Mr. Greene, thinking that he would prefer the Quorn country, signified his willingness to fill the position previously occupied by Mr. Greene. Needless to say the offer was accepted with alacrity, and at the close of the season 1846-47, Sir Richard transferred his establishment to Quorn.

Here at least was no scratch pack, such as had, with very few exceptions, hunted the Quorn country since Lord Foley's time (1807). The foundation of Sir Richard Sutton's pack had been laid many years before. He succeeded Mr. Assheton Smith in the Burton country in 1824, buying from him very many of his hounds, and, by careful and judicious breeding, raised the pack to a high standard, for his interest in his kennel was very great.

Sir Richard had something like eighteen years in Lincolnshire in which to get his kennel into order, and when he appeared in the Cottesmore country in 1842 he showed the men of the Midlands a pack of hounds which for symmetry and working qualities could scarcely be excelled; and these were the hounds he took into the Quorn country. It may be mentioned *en passant* that Sir Richard Sutton estimated that in thirty-two years or thereabouts, during which he had been a master of hounds, he had expended no less a sum than £300,000 on fox-hunting.

In accordance with precedent, a dinner was organised, and took place on the 17th November, to welcome Sir Richard Sutton to the Quorn country; while it was made to serve a twofold purpose by celebrating the advent of Mr. Henley Greaves to the Cottesmore, in succession to Sir Richard Sutton. This dinner, which took place at the George Hotel, Melton, does not appear to have been very well attended; but under the chairmanship of Colonel Wyndham — he rode over twenty stone, and invariably held a good place — things passed off pleasantly enough. In proposing the health of the new master, the colonel remarked that he had brought with him into the country a pack of hounds second to none, and a large family which were treading in their father's footsteps. Mr. Greaves' health was of course proposed, he being a sort of joint guest, and so was that of Mr. Greene, the ex-master of the Quorn.

Sir Richard Sutton and his hounds were not long in settling down in their new country; but Melton Mowbray itself was not so full as might have been expected, considering the prestige of the new master. Some careful statistician, who for some years appears to have made the round of the different stables, estimates that there were seventy fewer horses than in the previous season,

and many fewer than there were in Sir Harry Goodricke's day, when he himself headed the list with upwards of half a hundred, and Lord Forester owned thirty-eight.

For many years previous to Sir Richard Sutton taking the Quorn, the first Sunday in November was always a noted date for arrivals at Melton. On that day the first dinner of the season was held at the Old Club, and the older members of the Quorn Hunt made it a point of conscience to be present.

The rumbling of wheels and the measured trot of post-horses along the Melton streets had been aforetime a sign of the times ; but in Sir Richard Sutton's day the train did duty instead, and so the excitement of awaiting fresh arrivals was necessarily discounted.

Some lines in connection with "the four M's" have already been quoted, and of Sir James Musgrave it is related that he once came to grief over a fence, and broke his collar-bone. Finding himself unable to ride any of his tolerably numerous steeds, he, like the good sportsman he was, wrote to a friend in London to come down to ride his horses while he was on the shelf ; and the friend promptly responded, only too glad to shake from his feet the smut and dust of the metropolis. He arrived, provided with an equipment fitting him to take the field with such a fashionable pack as the Quorn, and one morning started for the covert-side, two of Sir James Musgrave's best horses having been sent on for him. He had a fall at the first fence, and broke *his* collar-bone, and so the two friends, in fine hunting weather, sat and nodded at each other from easy-chairs placed at opposite sides of the hearth in the hospitable mansion of Sir James at Melton.

The season 1847-48 was exceptionally mild, and so, after Christmas, foxes took to forsaking their usual haunts in favour of the open, when, of course, it was

not always easy for a huntsman to put his hand upon one just when he was wanted. Early in January 1848 "Sir Richard Sutton and his chopfallen breed were retiring from one of these scenes of disappointment," when a holloa back was heard, and every one thought that the pack had overdrawn a fox. The hounds were taken back in hot haste to the covert, and the master found some grinning yokels, who had given a false alarm, and to see the hounds and the field come rushing back amused them mightily. Some of the field, however, regarding this as a rather poor joke, somewhat unwisely proceeded to thrash the countrymen with their whips, and a regular scrimmage ensued, one gallant captain, who was riding with a cutting-whip, using it with such effect that he was reported to have nearly flayed the unlucky individual whom he selected for punishment. This was the substance of the first report, but a "Leicestershire farmer" in the Harborough country put a somewhat different complexion on the business. He explained that after the hounds had drawn a certain covert blank, the foot people began to holloa, and were civilly requested by Sir Richard Sutton and others to discontinue their noise. When the hounds were about three or four fields from the covert, the holloaing began again, and so sundry farmers, and not the "pinks," turned back and administered condign punishment to the natives who gave tongue all too freely. The farmers considered the hoax an insult to the master, and dealt with it accordingly.

Of Sir Richard Sutton the story has been told by Mr. Bromley Davenport how, during his early days of mastership of the Quorn, on being asked whether So-and-so, a new arrival, could ride, he replied, "I don't know; I have not seen him go; but I should think he could, for he hangs a very good boot."

Sir Richard, too, was once heard, on arriving at a

fixture, to put the following questions to his second horseman :—

“Many people out?”

“A great many, Sir Richard.”

“Ugh! Is Colonel F—— out?”

“Yes, Sir Richard.”

“Ugh! Ugh!! Is Mrs. B—— out?”

“Yes, Sir Richard.”

“Ugh! Ugh!! Ugh!!! Then couple up Valiant and Dauntless, and send them home in the brougham.”

Another old story is fathered on Sir Richard Sutton. A writer, who vouches for the truth of the statement, declared that Sir Richard Sutton in his hearing called aside a certain gentleman who was not very particular as to how close he rode to hounds, and warned him that he must be very careful not to ride over a particular hound, which he pointed out, adding: “I would not have him ridden over for anything.”

The gentleman promptly and courteously replied: “I will do anything I can to oblige you, Sir Richard, but I have a wretched memory for hounds, and I am afraid that he will have to take his chance with the rest.”

Sir Richard Sutton entered to hounds Ben Morgan, one of a famous family of huntsmen, and his portrait is to be seen in Sir Francis Grant’s picture of the Quorn. Whyte-Melville says that Ben Morgan was with Sir Richard Sutton in the Cottesmore country, and tells the following anecdote about him there :—

Many years ago, when he hunted the Cottesmore country, Sir Richard Sutton’s hounds had been running hard from Glooston Wood along the valley under Cranchal by Stourton to Holt. After thirty minutes or so over this beautiful, but exceedingly stiff line, their heads went up and they came to a check, possibly from their own dash and eagerness, certainly at that pace and amongst those fields not from being overridden.

“Turn ‘em, Ben!” exclaimed Sir Richard, with a dirty coat and Hotspur in a lather, but determined not to lose a moment in getting after his fox.

"Yes, Sir Richard," answered Morgan, running his horse without a moment's hesitation at a flight of double posts and rails, with a ditch in the middle and one on each side! The good grey having gone in front from the find was perhaps a little blown, and dropping his hind legs in the farthest ditch rolled very handsomely into the next field.

"It's not *your* fault, old man!" said Ben, patting his favourite on the neck as they rose together in mutual goodwill, adding in the same breath, while he leapt to the saddle, and Tranby acknowledged the line—

"Farrard on, Sir Richard!—Hoic, together. Hoic. He's a Quorn fox and he'll do you good."

I had always considered Ben Morgan an unusually fine rider. For the first time I began to understand why his horse never failed to carry him so willingly and so well.

Subsequently Ben Morgan became huntsman to the then Lord Middleton, and showed excellent sport. He hunted Lord Middleton's hounds until 1869, when, on being succeeded by George Orvis, he went to the Essex and Suffolk under Mr. Carrington Nunn.<sup>1</sup>

Ben Morgan died in 1880 at the house of his brother Goddard, who at one time hunted the Old Berkeley.

Whyte-Melville, in a passage following that quoted above, makes reference to Dick Webster, a very famous horseman, well known in the Quorn country. Speaking of the run in which Ben Morgan's horse fell with him at the double posts and rails, the famous novelist writes:—

I do not remember whether Dick Webster was out with us that day, but I am sure that if he was he has not forgotten it, and I mention him as another example of daring horsemanship, combined with an imperturbable good-humour, almost verging on buffoonery, which seems to accept the most dangerous falls as enhancing the fun afforded to a delightful game at romps.

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<sup>1</sup> Ben Morgan was one of the four sons of old Jem Morgan, who for a long time hunted Mr. Conyer's hounds in Essex. Jem Morgan was the son of a Suffolk yeoman, a circumstance which may suffice to explain why the family gravitated towards the east country.

Even so good a sportsman as Sir Richard Sutton found himself unable to please everybody. On the 29th December 1847, in Sir Richard's first season, the hounds were due to meet at the Shearsby Sun, a fixture attended by a good many Atherstone and Pytchley men, among the visitors being a sportsman who subsequently figured in print as an "Impartial Observer." He admitted that a dense fog hung over the country, and because Sir Richard Sutton, deeming the weather too thick for hunting, trotted back to his supplementary kennel at Oadby, the itinerant hunting-man waxed exceeding wroth, and declared how different would have been the action of Mr. Osbaldeston or Sir Harry Goodricke in like circumstances. There was a P.S. to the letter to the effect that the Pytchley, Atherstone, and Warwickshire had good runs on the day in question. This letter was answered by another, the writer stating that on account of the fog the Pytchley never drew a covert all day; while this was followed by another communication, from a farmer who was out with the Pytchley, giving the details of a very good run which took place on the Friday in question!

Scarcely had the season 1848-49 begun than a somewhat unusual circumstance occurred with Sir Richard Sutton's hounds—they were no longer called the Quorn. They met at Ratcliffe. After a good thirty minutes with the first fox, another was found at Holwell Mouth, whence hounds ran at a good pace up Broughton Hill Side and over Wartnarbey Stone Pits to a small plantation in which the discharge of a double-barrelled gun was heard, and it was then found that a farmer had shot the fox. Lord Forester, who was out, "named" another delinquent who lived close to Melton Mowbray, and stated that not only had he been guilty of the same act before, but had publicly boasted of his success as a vulpicide. This man chanced to be out on the occasion

of the fox being shot, and was pointed out by Ben Morgan as well in a fit of righteous indignation. Not far off a brace of dead foxes were found hanging on a tree. Several other cases of fox-killing having taken place, several people turned their backs on Melton, among them being Mr. Palk, Mr. Surtees, Lord Newport, Sir Walter Carew, Mr. Coke, Mr. Leslie, Mr. Stirling Crawford, Mr. Oliver Massey, Captain Forester, and some others. The mania for killing foxes was not at this period confined to the Quorn country, for the masters of the Pytchley, Atherstone, and Warwickshire Hunts complained of the same thing, and this while old oats were realising from 28s. to 32s. a quarter, beans, hay, and straw also bringing remunerative prices. Estimates of expenditure are not perhaps to be depended upon for strict accuracy, but some one in Leicester who took the trouble to make inquiries stated that the Pytchley, Warwickshire, and Atherstone Hunts caused the circulation of no less a sum than £90,000 in each country, whilst the money spent in connection with the Quorn involved the circulation of £120,000 a year, making an estimated total of £390,000 for the four hunts.

Meantime Sir Richard Sutton's hounds enjoyed excellent sport, the season 1849-50 being especially prolific in good runs.

On Friday, 16th November 1849, hounds met at Houghton, and finding a fox at Shangton Holt ran once or twice round the covert, the fox next making for Hardwickes, and then, turning to the right for Staunton Lodge, crossed the brook for Tur Langton, but left that place on the right of Church Langton, and after leaving Kibworth crossed a turnpike road between that place and Glen, and passing in succession Lower Kibworth, Kibworth Harcourt Church, and Carlton Clump, went to ground in a drain at Smeaton, an hour and twenty-five minutes from the time of finding. The first fifteen minutes, however, were occupied in running rings; but for the last hour and ten minutes hounds ran as hard as they could go; drew away from the field and had all the fun to themselves, there being no one near them when the



fox was marked to ground. The only person who was within half-a-dozen fields of the pack after the first ten minutes was Mr. Edward Cheney, who was "warmly congratulated by Sir Richard on his attempt to catch the hounds."

The close of December 1849 brought with it more good sport, as among others the hounds had a run of over two hours, and it was fast, time and distance being taken into account. The season 1849-50 was brought to an end with a good run of about an hour and ten minutes; and an informal dinner, at which about fifty or sixty members of the Hunt attended, took place at the King's Head, Loughborough.

During the season 1849-50, when the hounds met at Ratcliffe, "two moustached and military-looking men" were seen at Cossington Gorse, and were at first thought to be a couple of officers from Weedon. They went fairly well through the not very long or fast runs which comprised the day's sport, and then repaired to Syston Station, ordered brandy and water and something to eat, wrapped themselves in fur coats, and departed by train. The landlord, struck by their foreign accent and appearance, was curious as to their identity, and one of them proved to be Louis Napoleon, two years later Prince President of the Republic, and subsequently Emperor.

The season of 1850-51, besides being enlivened with much good sport, is noteworthy for a run with a point of twenty miles.

Hounds met at Ratcliffe on Friday 27th December 1850, that being their first day out since the frost which had kept hounds in kennel for a week or more. Cossington Gorse held "the best and gamest fox that ever crossed Leicestershire." After going over the Foss road the hounds overran the scent, and a slight check ensued. On the line being recovered away went the hounds towards Thrussington village, and then away for Ragdale. Turning a little to the right the fox headed for Hoby, and Six Hills was soon sighted; and then the line lay away for Schoby

Scholes, Saxelby, and Welby Fishponds. Just thirty minutes from the start the Nottingham road was crossed, and by this time some of the horses and riders had had enough, the field having tailed terribly; but this was merely the introduction to the run, and twenty-two minutes after crossing the Nottingham road hounds were close to Holwell village. Sir Richard Sutton, Lord Granby, Lord Wilton, and Mr. Little Gilmour<sup>1</sup> were in the front rank, but no one else appears to have been very near them at that moment. From Holwell to Scalford the pace moderated to some extent; another ten minutes at the previous rate would have left the hounds all to themselves. Hounds, however, again ran faster as they swept into the valley towards Brentingby, and were travelling quickly as the line lay in the direction of Freeby Wood, which the fox did not enter; and then leaving Sproxton Thorns to the left he went away towards Owston, where, bending to the left, he made for Sproxton Church. In a farmyard through which the fox ran was the carcass of a dead sheep, and the fox actually stopped to have a bite as he went along. Passing through Saltby village and going on till within a couple of miles of Bescoby Oaks the fox swung short to the right, and running to the right of Swallow Hole crossed Saltby Heath, ran between Humberstone Gorse and Tipping to the Three Queens, and was eventually pulled down in a field adjoining the road leading from Denton to Hungerton Old Hall, Harlaxton perhaps being the place at which the run may be said to have finished. At Denton Park it was said that the fox was on one side of a fence and the hounds on the other, but the pack were so beat that they could not get over the fence. It must not be left unsaid that "Master Egerton, youngest son of the Earl of Wilton, was able to ride through the entire run." Horses and hounds were dead beat and could not possibly travel back to kennel that night, so the whole establishment, as well as the few who had struggled to the end, were hospitably entertained at Belvoir, departing for their homes next morning.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gilmour was a Scotchman, but early betook himself to Leicestershire, where he belonged to Lord Rokeby's Club at Melton Mowbray. He was only a young man of about twenty-three or twenty-four when "Nimrod" introduced him into the famous *Quarterly Review* run, but as a matter of fact Mr. Gilmour never hunted with the Quorn during the mastership of Mr. Osbaldeston. The sketch, altogether a fancy one, was not written at the time, a circumstance which accounts for a mistake or two. Mr. Gilmour was one of Leicestershire's heavy weights, riding nearly seventeen stone, yet he was almost invariably in the front rank. He died at St. John's Wood on 30th September 1887, and was buried in Greyfriars churchyard, Edinburgh.

Twenty miles is said to have been the distance between the two furthest points of this great run, but, according to experts, hounds ran a distance of thirty-seven miles, while a timekeeper declared that it lasted for four hours and a quarter; so there must have been a little mistake somewhere, as hunters would be unlikely to gallop nearly forty miles at a pace not far short of ten miles an hour.

In January 1851 Sir Richard Sutton narrowly escaped a bad accident, through a boy riding hard against him at a gateway and driving his leg against the post. Sir Richard did not feel any ill effects at the moment, but by the time he reached Lincoln, whither he had gone to spend a few days, considerable inflammation had set in, so a surgeon was sent for from London, but some time elapsed before Sir Richard Sutton could ride again.

Almost before he was convalescent, a charge was made against him of buying foxes from a London dealer and turning them down in his own country. In a letter which was printed in the *Leicester Journal*, and which was headed "Scarcity of foxes in the North Riding of Yorkshire," an anecdote was related of a young man who was desirous of having a fox. To satisfy his ambition, he entered into negotiations with "an eminent dealer in animals," living in London. The dealer wrote back to say that he had "an unlimited order for all the foxes he could get from Sir Richard Sutton." Sir Richard's solicitors, on the matter being placed in their hands, at once wrote to the *Leicester Journal* to give the most unqualified denial to the statement of the "eminent dealer in animals." They declared in explicit terms that Sir Richard Sutton had never given an order for a fox to any one, and that he had never bought any.<sup>1</sup> That,

<sup>1</sup> In connection with this subject it may be interesting to point out that for some years prior to the establishment of the Fox-hunting Committee at Boodle's Club, some masters of hounds were in the habit of dining together

however, was neither the first occasion nor the last on which charges of purchasing foxes for Leicestershire were preferred.

St. Valentine's Day 1851 saw another good run after meeting at Kirby Gate. A fox was soon found in Sir Francis Burdett's Gorse, and while hounds were running him another fox jumped up and was snapped up at once; but he spoiled the run. Hounds were then taken on to Ashby Pastures, where they came across what was thought to be their first fox, and away he went; but it was not until the expiration of two hours and twenty minutes, the pace having been fast all the way, that he "was forced to yield to the superior prowess and force of Sir Richard's pack in a field near Burley Wood." This run was long enough and fast enough to knock up most of the horses, if at least we may trust the writer of an account of what took place afterwards.

One noble lord from Leicester, rather celebrated for his red face, actually rode his horse to death by the time they reached Cold Overton Wood, a most cruel act in any circumstance. In a few moments another, the property of a gallant captain from the same town, dropped and died; while several others were so much exhausted as to be obliged to be left at barns or farmhouses for the night. The scene on the road home between Oakham and Melton will not soon be forgotten, for here was a game squire flogging his noble animal before him; next was a noble lord riding behind Mr. L. (*i.e.* on Mr. L.'s horse), because he had blown his own horse, left him behind, and, worse than all, got his leather breeches so wet that he could not move one leg before the other.

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in London during the season, and at one of these dinners Mr. Maberley, a M.F.H. of the time, was "sat upon" by some of his brother masters for having turned down bought foxes in his country. In no wise abashed, Mr. Maberley, quietly rising to his feet, said, "If all the masters of hounds will agree not to purchase a fox, I will gladly put my name at the top of the list; but so long as it is the universal practice to purchase foxes, I am necessarily compelled to do the same, and I do not hesitate to declare that I will purchase in the best market I possibly can, whatever may be the part of the island." Neither then nor at any subsequent period does any attempt appear to have been made to confute the speaker's statements.

After them came another fagging along, carrying his saddle on his back, and entreating every one who passed him to send Brown, the veterinary surgeon. At the station end of the town, no sooner did a horse appear coming down the Burton Hill than there were cries of "Have you seen my servant?" "D—— *your* servant, have you seen mine?" "Do you know anything of my master?" "Yes, he's just coming along." "How's the horses?" "Bunged up and left at Oakham." "Where's the hounds?" "Gone home by a special they telegraphed for from Stamford." And so the game went on until after nine o'clock at night!

The year 1851 saw the death of a good sporting farmer, Mr. Glossop, who, though a Yorkshireman, was accustomed to pay an annual visit to Leicestershire, when he always went out with the Quorn as often as possible. He was born at Slade Haston in Yorkshire, and though he had to work on his father's farm, he was always keen on hunting. In his own county he was regarded as a remarkably hard man to hounds, and in Leicestershire he well maintained his reputation; and on one occasion he pounded a large field over a big gate, thereby putting a hundred-pound note into the pocket of Mr. Bennet Martin, who accepted the bet offered by some one else that the "old Yorkshireman" would not have the gate. Mr. Glossop was a capital judge of a horse, and as he indulged in dealing to a certain extent, he enjoyed his hunting at a tolerably cheap rate. He died at the age of seventy-nine, and hunted almost up to the last.

It will be remembered that mention was made of a committee in the time of Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Greene, and this body would appear to have existed in Sir Richard Sutton's time; though their ostensible duty was merely to pay covert rents and see after them generally. In a year or two, however, after his accession to the mastership, he dispensed with all subscriptions—became "independent master," which probably meant that the committee dissolved itself, and handed over the

care of the coverts to Sir Richard Sutton, who thereupon bought and restored Quorndon Hall, of which he had previously been tenant only.

By this time (1852) railways had made their mark, and so far as Leicestershire is concerned it was feared that they would deal a heavy blow to fox-hunting, and when the Midland line first intersected the country from north to south the gravest fears for hunting were entertained. Afterwards the Syston and Peterborough line was opened to cut through the eastern portion of the country, and then came the Leicester and Ashby section to more or less interfere with the western part. The railways no doubt changed the run of foxes, and were the cause of several inconveniences; but the verdict in the Quorn country was that the advantages they offered in the way of transit and the saving of fatigue to both horse and man, in addition to enabling the Quorn men to make their way to the Donington country if they wished, and to the fixtures of other hunts, counterbalanced the injury to hunting which they were supposed to inflict.

Mr. Thomas Craddock, the third of his family to be secretary of the Quorn Hunt, was by profession a solicitor; and though he was courteous to all the farmers and kept them in good humour, there was one who refused to become friendly, and he one day sued Sir Richard Sutton for damages for riding over his land, so Mr. Craddock was engaged for the defence. Sir Richard, through his solicitor, offered the man a liberal sum, which was refused with the remark that he "intended to strangle fox-hunting altogether." The farmer, however, appears to have got up his case very badly, for he sought to identify Sir Richard Sutton by stating that he wore a hunting cap and a scarlet cloak, a dress which, Mr. Craddock pointed out, was worn by many members of the Hunt; and as the farmer could carry his case no further he was nonsuited, or, in the words of some of

the hunting men in court, was "grassed," and "saddled" with the costs.

In 1852, too, Leicestershire lost another of its notable riders, Lord Rancliffe, who for many seasons had hunted with the Quorn; in fact, for a generation he had been a notable figure at all the Quorn fixtures. He lived at Bunny Park, and being a very light weight, is reported to have always ridden Arabs; he possessed a strong seat, beautiful hands, and he knew every fence in the country, while after dinner he was a capital *raconteur*. On one occasion when a storm of unusual severity had driven the field to seek the shelter of a farm-house, and the farmer's wife was busying herself about her unbidden guests to the detriment of her own dinner, which was in course of cooking, Lord Rancliffe proffered his services to see to the piece of bacon and to mull the ale, both of which duties he accomplished to the complete satisfaction of the good-wife, who had not the slightest idea of the identity of the amateur chef. He was popular everywhere, but dignified withal, and a local worthy once summed him up by saying, "He's a little 'un; but he's every inch a lord." Close by the side of Bunny Hall stood a curious sort of tower, built by Sir Thomas Parkyns, Lord Rancliffe's great-grandfather, for the purpose of seeing as much of the hounds as he could when they were out in that district, and on the summit of this tower the old baronet and his wife often enjoyed what they called a day's hunting. Lord Rancliffe himself, too, when no longer able to mount his hunters, used to mount the tower, and it was from its battlements that he gave his last tally-ho!

Ratcliffe, all through Sir Richard Sutton's mastership, appears to have been a lucky fixture, and after meeting there about the middle of January 1852, a first-rate run began at Ellar's Gorse. It was late in the afternoon when hounds found after several blank draws, and

chopping a fox in Sir Archibald Seymour's Gorse, which, so far as can be made out, was planted to take the place of Munday's Gorse, which had been grubbed up.

The Ellar's Gorse fox went away over the wolds as fast as his legs could carry him, and there being a burning scent, hounds raced away at a pace which a few only of the field could maintain. The fox presently went down into the vale, and was handsomely rolled over after a run of an hour and seventeen minutes, the distance being given as seventeen miles.

Hunting men of a former generation may have been bold riders and very excellent sportsmen ; but many of them were desperately bad timekeepers or judges of distance. Fancy seventeen miles covered in seventy-seven minutes—each mile in about four minutes and a half ! Just afterwards the hounds met at Wymeswold, a fixture which always drew a large field, being almost central between Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, and Melton, and on the occasion in question the officers of Lord Cardigan's regiment mustered in force. The day was remarkable, not only for the afternoon run, but for the fact that Sir Richard Sutton, who was punctuality itself, was fifteen minutes late. He, together with Lord Cardigan, had been to his seat in Norfolk for shooting, and had posted across country after some hard work on the previous day.

The fact that Willoughby Gorse was blank was less of a surprise than a disappointment. The covert was situate on the Wymeswold estate, and the shooting was in the hands of a sporting baker who does not appear to have been even a good game-preserved, for his coverts were not half watched, with the result that they were the happy hunting-grounds of poachers who, while they made free with the game, and perhaps with the foxes, at any rate so disturbed the latter that they were seldom in covert when wanted. The Curate, however, provided a good fox ; Kinoulton and Hickling were soon left behind, and the racing pack ran into the vale ; but daylight was waning, and it was about dusk



when a very few of the morning's field found themselves at Redmile, beyond Belvoir Castle. Several of those who were up at the finish were fifteen or seventeen miles from home; but the general verdict was that no one would have grudged a journey of a hundred miles home after such an excellent run.

A noted horseman, Captain Campbell, was on a visit to Beaumanor, and went out with Sir Richard Sutton's hounds as often as possible. Towards the close of December 1852, when the floods were out, the captain had gone to some fixture on the eastern side of the country, and had not arrived at his host's house at seven o'clock, the dinner-hour. The host, anxious for the welfare of his guest, sent a groom over to Quorn Hall to make inquiries. The master's reply was:—

I can give a good account of the fox, but as to accounting for men, especially when the run is in the water instead of on land, it is quite out of the question. However, now I think of it, I did see Campbell plashing down the Whissendine Brook, and his horse water-logged in mid-channel, but further deponent knoweth not, for the hounds were in full cry; but no doubt Campbell reached the shore in safety, or I should have heard of it. His dead horse I saw lying on the bank on our return. Tell the ladies at Beaumanor to play "The Campbells are Coming," and no doubt he will soon reach the Hall.

Soon after eight o'clock the captain appeared safe and sound at Beaumanor. The rains above, however, and the floods below, never once deterred the master of the Quorn from keeping his fixture. When the meadows and roads between Barrow and Quorn were impassable, the Soar was crossed at Cotes, the van conveying the pack, his carriage Sir Richard and the Misses Sutton; old Day and "young-eyed Day," the whips, swam the torrent; while the carriage doors were opened to give the water free course and avoid the chance of an overturn.

Quite early in his mastership, Sir Richard Sutton

announced his intention of hunting, if he could, six days a week, and this intention he carried out, hunting the Donington as well as the Quorn country; but he presently announced that he would hunt eight days a week, and this he accomplished by handing over to his son, Mr. Richard Sutton, the Harborough country, which he hunted two days a week, he himself carrying the horn, and having Ben Boothroyd as first whipper-in.<sup>1</sup> It was just about the time when Sir Richard delegated the Harborough country to his eldest son Richard that Mr. Farnham, member of Parliament for North Leicestershire, lost his horse and narrowly escaped a very serious accident. Riding a valuable hunter over an old and rickety bridge which spanned a brook, the structure gave way. Mr. Farnham escaped with a shaking, but the horse broke its back, and was shot.

A very famous run, which happily involved no serious accident to man or horse, came off on the 21st March 1854. The ground was so dry that a small number only wended their way to Launde Abbey.

Tilton Wood was drawn, and therefrom a stout fox went away at once in the direction of Halstead, running to the left of Tilton village, and then headed straight for Skeffington Hall, leaving that on the right; and making his way through the Rolleston plantations at first, headed for Alexton, but changing his mind turned over the best of the country for Shangton Holt, which he did not enter. At a pace which left most of the field behind, hounds skirted Shangton Holt, ran by Illston-on-the-Hill by Newton Gorse, the nearest man to them being Mr. Lloyd on The Felon, this good horse carrying his rider as straight as an arrow by Burton Abbey and on to Glenn Gorse, through which the fox ran, and, passing to the left of Westow House, went on to Fleckney and Counterthorpe, but only to double and bear for Shearsby Inn, where he was lost, for the simple reason that hounds could go no further. For the last four miles their huntsman, like every one

<sup>1</sup> For further particulars see chapter i., "The Quorn Country: Its Hounds, &c.," p. 3.

else, was nowhere near them, and as in a former run the fox was for some time on one side of the fence while the hounds were running hard on the other, and the pack had not the strength to get either through or over the fence. The whole distance was said to be twenty-five miles, and the time an hour and a half. Here, therefore, is another instance of the absolute untrustworthiness of either the time or distance, if not both, of some of the other runs read about in comparatively olden, as well as in modern times. The first flight, such as it was, consisted of Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Wood, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Heycock, Captain Hawksley, the Hon. H. Coventry, Lord Gardner, &c. All the horses were completely settled, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the hounds were taken to Leicester, where a special train was chartered, and the hounds, horses, and some of the field were carried along the Syston and Peterborough line, the Meltonians being dropped *en route*, and the rest taken on to Oakham.

In the year 1855 a fillip was given to the social life of Melton Mowbray by a lengthy visit of the Duchess of Cambridge and the Princess Mary (Duchess of Teck) to the Earl and Countess of Wilton at Egerton Lodge ; but at the same time the pleasure of hunting men was somewhat marred by the discovery that a dog fox and a brace of vixens had been poisoned in Sir Harry Goodricke's Gorse. The two vixens were buried, but the dog was sent for examination to Mr. Brown, the noted veterinary surgeon of Melton. He found in the stomach of the fox, which weighed 16 lbs.,<sup>1</sup> the remains of a poisoned "crow"; but as some of the local farmers had taken to the practice of setting poison for rooks, it was thought, after due consideration, that the foxes were killed, not by poison set for them, but because they had eaten the rooks which had partaken of the poisoned food.

Early in the year 1855, Sir Richard Sutton had made casual mention of his desire to resign the master-

<sup>1</sup> The average weight of a dog fox is about 13 lbs. They have weighed as little as 11 lbs. and as much as 20 lbs. ; but these more gigantic specimens have been killed in the Fell countries. Vixens scale about 2 lbs. less than dogs.

ship of the Quorn Hunt, a position which had entailed a considerable amount of anxiety, but his friends kept urging him to remain at the post he so well adorned. So popular was he that in the year 1852 the members of the Hunt commissioned Sir Francis (then Mr. F.) Grant to paint Sir Richard's portrait, which he did with the greatest success, the picture including likenesses of Tom Day, Ben and Jack Morgan the whippers-in, and also the Duke of Rutland, the Marquis of Granby, the Hon. Colonel Lowther, Mr. Assheton Smith, Mr. Greene, Mr. H. Heathcote, Mr. Banks Wright, Messrs. Frank, Charles, and Richard Sutton, and Mr. John Wood.

Just about this time it was noted that some of the best horsewomen in England were hunting in Leicestershire, ladies who could and did go perfectly straight; but it was remarked that in no case did ladies wear spurs, while a further item of gossip was that Mr. Rowland Smith, a member of an unlucky family, had sustained a somewhat severe accident. While riding a hard puller near Ashby-de-la-Zouch his horse ran him against a tree and broke his arm. Only a few days before Mr. Smith's brother, while following the Hertfordshire hounds, met with a very similar mishap. His horse bolted, and running against a tree, severely injured his rider's knee-cap; and to make the story complete, the father of the two sons, when hunting in Hertfordshire, sustained a fall and had his shoulder very much injured.

A rhymester, too, paid his tribute to the excellence of Sir Richard's rule, one of the verses of his hunting song being—

Then long may good Sir Richard live to grace his honoured name,  
 And long, too, may his gallant sons uphold their father's fame;  
 And distant be the day when we shall see him quit the field,  
 And leave to hand less gracefully the hunter's horn to wield.  
 Then join with me right heartily, and a chorus loud we'll chime  
 For this fine old English gentleman, the pride of modern time.



Mr. Coke

Frank Forster

Lord Kinnaird

Mr. Green

Dick Christian

Lord Forster

THE WHISSENDINE APPEARS IN VIEW. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



The good wishes contained in this stanza were, it need not be said, heartily re-echoed by all the followers of Sir Richard Sutton's hounds; but unhappily the time was fast drawing near when the popular master was to be cut off almost in the prime of life, at the comparatively early age of fifty-seven. His hounds had enjoyed many good runs; but seeing that he had a stud of about eighty horses, a monster pack of hounds, and paid all expenses himself, he came to the conclusion that the game was not worth the candle, and that, owing to one thing and another, the average sport was not good enough to warrant his expenditure. On this account it was that he determined to resign at the end of the season 1855-56.

The end, however, came before that, as on the 14th November 1855 the hunting world of Leicestershire was greatly shocked at learning that Sir Richard Sutton had died suddenly at his London residence, Cambridge House, Piccadilly. On the previous Monday he had gone to London on business. On Wednesday he rose in his usual health, ate a good breakfast, wrote some letters, and was shortly afterwards found dead in the lavatory. The sad news of Sir Richard Sutton's decease reached Quorndon Hall soon after the hounds had started for Ratcliffe,<sup>1</sup> and a mounted messenger being despatched, the hounds were of course recalled, and the utmost sorrow prevailed in Leicestershire. Men on arriving at the fixture would scarcely credit the news; but it proved to be only too true.

Sir Richard Sutton came of a good old family, tracing back to the Normans, the late master being eighteenth in descent from Richard or Roland de Sutton (upon Trent), who is mentioned in Thornton's "Antiquities of Nottingham," so that, although Sir Richard was not a Leicestershire man, he was very near being one. Sir William Sutton, who lived in the time of Charles I., was,

<sup>1</sup> See note, page 336.

for his devoted allegiance to his sovereign, raised to the peerage as Lord Lexington; but the title became extinct, though it is by no means certain that it could not have been successfully claimed by later members of the family. Sir Richard, who was the eldest son of Mr. John Sutton, son of Sir Richard Sutton, formerly Under-Secretary of State, was born on the 16th December 1798, and when in his fourth year succeeded to the baronetcy, on the death of his grandfather, the first holder of the title. As a most courteous gentleman and a keen all-round sportsman he had scarcely any equal. Possibly Assheton Smith was rather the bolder horseman of the two, and both had their fields under command; but Sir Richard was the more careful man; he had more consideration for his horses than had Mr. Smith. As a shot, Sir Richard Sutton shone supremely.

General Anson, then accounted one of the best rabbit shots of the day, was once backed against Sir Richard Sutton for a day's rabbit-shooting at Colonel Peel's. Sir Richard arrived rather late—a most unusual circumstance for him, who was the essence of punctuality. He was informed that a wager had been made as to his score compared with that of Colonel Anson, but he merely replied, "Never mind; I shall be with him presently;" and so he was, as before three o'clock in the afternoon he was several couples to the good, and eventually won.

Like many another good sportsman, Sir Richard had strong likes and dislikes. Differing from Mr. Osbaldeston, he could not endure pigeon-shooting, and he compared carrying a bird to a trap and shooting it to turning a stag out of a cart; but his experience of stag-hunting appears to have been confined to an unlucky day with Mr. Robert Hamond's staghounds when he was down in Norfolk for shooting. The hounds met on the confines of Swaffham Heath, about seven miles from Lindford; but on this particular occasion the stag, by his "cussedness," enabled



Sir Richard, who was no admirer of stag-hunting at the best of times, to turn the whole matter into ridicule. When the deer was uncartered, he kept trotting up and down among the horses, and more than once had a good stare at the master of the Burton (Sir Richard Sutton was hunting that country at the time). The deer would not run, so was put back in his cart, Sir Richard Sutton's comment being that it was better than *Punch*. For several years he rented Mrs. Farquharson's moor in Aberdeenshire, and often killed a hundred brace of grouse in a day, while, until he broke his thigh in the Burton country, he achieved no little fame as a deer-stalker. On coming south for hunting, he shot every day on which hounds were not out.

It speaks well for Sir Richard, too, that all his hunt servants were so much attached to him. When he took over the Burton country he engaged Jem Shirley, an "owdacious man with a big voice," and Jem Wilson, who had formerly lived with Mr. Assheton Smith. When Sir Richard Sutton broke his thigh, as already mentioned,<sup>1</sup> and there was some chance of the hounds being given up, Shirley was told that he would have to go, but he replied that he would not; and when informed that he would have no wages, he promptly answered that he would stop without any pay.

He then went into Norfolk with Sir Richard, where he lived in the house, walked, as fast as his increasing waistcoat would let him, with the gentlemen out shooting, and fancied himself a gamekeeper. He was reinstated in his berth as soon as his master got well again, and Jem Wilson remained on as whip.

Sir Richard Sutton dying in mid-season, some arrangement was necessary for the carrying on of the Quorn Hunt; and for this purpose his two sons, Messrs. Richard and Frank Sutton, managed affairs, the former

<sup>1</sup> This is said to have happened owing to the fancy Sir Richard had for riding bad horses. He knew this, however, and would ride almost anything that would jump. The horse which gave him this fall refused several times, and then went crashing through the fence, fell on the edge of the ditch on the other side, with his rider's thigh underneath him, and this lamed Sir Richard Sutton for life.

confining himself chiefly to the Harborough country, which he hunted; but on his father's death he notified his intention of giving up the country. Mr. F. Sutton, with a scratch pack, hunted the country south of the Wreake, occupying the Quorn kennels.

Soon after Sir Richard Sutton's death, his hounds and horses were sold by Messrs. Tattersall, and they realised good prices.<sup>1</sup>

At the conclusion of the season 1855-56, Mr. Richard Sutton disposed of his pack of forty couples, besides sundry young hounds.

Within a week or two of Sir Richard Sutton's death, a meeting was held at the Bell Hotel, Leicester, to consider what course should be taken to secure the hunting of the Quorn country. Lord Berners, who presided, said that there had been a preliminary gathering at Mr. Farnham's house, and it was then agreed that the present meeting should be arranged. He announced that no one had come forward to hunt the country north of the Wreake; but that for the remainder of the season Mr. Richard Sutton (Sir Richard after his father's death) had consented to hunt three days a week south of the Wreake for whatever subscriptions could be collected. In the absence of any offer for the remainder of the country, Lord Berners suggested that a communication should be made to Lord Forester, inquiring whether he would be willing to hunt the

<sup>1</sup> The prices were: five couples, Lord Stamford, 59 guineas; five couples, Mr. Drake, 52 guineas; five couples, Mr. Morrell, 210 guineas; five couples, Mr. R. Sutton, 200 guineas; five couples, Lord Stamford, 61 guineas; five couples, Lord Stamford, 46 guineas; five couples, Mr. R. Sutton, 100 guineas; five couples, Mr. Mainwaring, 170 guineas; five couples, Mr. Collier, 39 guineas; five couples, Mr. Mainwaring, 13 guineas; five couples, Mr. R. Sutton, 300 guineas; five couples, Lord Stamford, 74 guineas; five couples, Mr. R. Sutton, 260 guineas; five couples, Mr. Collier, 105 guineas. Total for the hounds, 1806 guineas. Thirty-two hunters realised 5812 guineas, and the others about 400 guineas. Six cub-hunters were sold for 466 guineas; three hacks for 242 guineas; the ponies brought 1068 guineas; the whole total, including the hound-van, saddlery, &c., being £8664.

country north of the Wreake for the remainder of the season. It was agreed that Mr. Sutton's offer should be accepted, and that the offer should be made to Lord Forester. Mr. Dawson, a well-known member of the Hunt, did not like the idea of the Donington country being left open, and suggested that for the future it should be separated from the Quorn, as it was very improbable that any one else would be found to hunt the Quorn country as the late master had hunted it. It was then agreed that a letter, similar to that indited to Lord Forester, should be forwarded to Lord Chesterfield, expressing a hope that he might see his way to hunting the Donington country. During the remainder of the season the Messrs. Sutton carried on the thread of fox-hunting, and amid a general lamentation Sir Richard's Sutton's rule came to an end as already described.





## CHAPTER IX

EARL OF STAMFORD AND WARRINGTON

(1856-1863)



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### EARL OF STAMFORD AND WARRINGTON

1856-1863

SIR RICHARD SUTTON having died November 1855, and the negotiations with Lord Forester, Lord Chesterfield, and Sir Richard Sutton's sons having fallen through, it became necessary to lose no time in looking about for a fresh master, especially as it was not considered likely that a second Sir Richard Sutton would be easily found. The Donington country, too, was something of a trouble, as it was literally swarming with foxes, and sundry occupiers of land were heard to declare that they must be killed somehow.

At this juncture the Quorn committee determined to approach Lord Stamford, who was then hunting the Albrighton country, and they selected as their plenipotentiary Mr. John Storey, who had been hunting the Donington country, and who appears to have been a born diplomatist. By rail and post-chaise he went straight away to Enville Hall, where he learned that the noble lord of whom he was in quest was out shooting. Mr. Storey, with the interest of the Quorn Hunt at his heart, went in pursuit of the shooters, and gained courage when he learned that Lord Strathmore, whom he knew, was one of the party. By Lord Strathmore Mr. Storey was introduced to Lord Stamford, to whom he was personally unknown; shooting was suspended, and the trio returned to Enville Hall. Once under Lord Stam-

ford's hospitable roof, Mr. Storey lost no time in making his mission known. "Well, my lord," he said, "I come with full powers to offer you the first hunting country in the world. Leicestershire wants a master, and it is determined, with your permission, to have Lord Stamford."

The earl replied that he was very much flattered by the offer which had been made to him, and that it was the height of his ambition to hunt what he might almost call his native country; but that he could not cast off the Albrighton "like an old shoe."<sup>1</sup>

No man, we are told, is as good as his principles, and subsequently Lord Stamford gave in to Mr. John Storey's persuasive eloquence; he did give up the Albrighton, and when Mr. Storey set out on his homeward journey, he had in his pocket Lord Stamford's written promise to become the seventeenth master of the Quorn, that is to say, of the country north of the Wreake, Mr. Sutton having the country south of that river. It was further understood that Lord Stamford would decline all subscriptions save in the shape of a covert fund.

Lord and Lady Stamford took up their residence at Bradgate Park; but the new master rented the Quorn stables and kennels from Mr. E. Warner (of the firm of Cartwright & Warner), who had purchased the Quorndon Hall estate from the representatives of Sir Richard Sutton at a large price, exclusive of the valuable furniture, which was to be taken at a valuation.

George Harry Grey, the seventh Earl of Stamford and Warrington, was the son of Lord Grey of Groby, and on the latter's death, the son was but ten years old on succeeding to the barony; while on the decease of

<sup>1</sup> Another story is that Lord Stamford was only too glad to shake from his feet the Albrighton dust, as not only did he have some sort of dispute with the Hunt, but he found foxes very short.



his grandfather the sixth earl, the master of the Quorn came into the great fortune which enabled him to hunt the country in such magnificent style. Lord Stamford was educated at Eton and Cambridge—what a number of masters of hounds those two seats of learning have turned out—and quite in his early years he showed a remarkable aptitude for all athletic exercises, especially cricket; and when at Cambridge he kept his horses at Huntingdon, the packs which he chiefly followed being the Oakley and the Fitz-William, though he sometimes travelled as far as the Quorn. But it was rarely that he went out with Squire Barnett (then master of the Cambridgeshire), though he entertained the greatest respect for that excellent sportsman; but he did not deem his country sufficiently tempting. As a master of hounds Lord Stamford began with the Albrighton, which country he hunted for a season or two from 1848, he being succeeded by the Hon. Arthur Wrottesley; but came again to the rescue of the country in 1855, giving it up for the Quorn, as already mentioned, in 1856.

Lord Stamford bought several lots of hounds at the sales of Sir Richard and Mr. Sutton, and also drew on the stock of Captain Anstruther Thomson; but in addition he bought the entire Bedale pack from Mr. Milbank, and also Mr. Shaw Hellier's hounds.<sup>1</sup> When he became master of the Quorn, therefore, he had about eighty couples of good hounds, and a stud of something like eighty-seven hunters and hacks. Ben Boothroyd, who had been with Mr. Storey in the Donington country, was installed in the huntsman's berth, Sam Bacon and James Maiden being the whippers-in.

The cub-hunting season was successful enough, and late in October, after meeting at Thornton Roughs, the hounds had a run of two hours and forty minutes. On

<sup>1</sup> See page 29.

the first day of the regular season, the fixture was changed from the time-honoured Kirby Gate to Ashfordby; but there appears to have been some misunderstanding as to the opening day, as not a few hunting men made their way to Kirby Gate.

Ashfordby, by the way, was the residence of two gentlemen who both died since the previous season had opened at Kirby Gate, one of them a few days only before the Ashfordby fixture. They were Mr. John Dick Burnaby of the Hall, and the Reverend Andrew Burnaby, the rector. The latter was a "character." He at one time kept a large private school at Louth, in Lincolnshire, and enjoyed great fame as a scholar. He published, in addition to some Latin poems, a good many in English, some of both being in praise of the chase; while a book called *Horæ Scholasticæ* was also from his pen. In due course the rich family living of Ashfordby fell vacant, and on his induction thereto, he shut himself up in the big rectory house without a single attendant, and lived the life of an anchorite. His benevolence, however, was only bounded by his means, for nearly every shilling of his income was expended in works of charity. Possessed, however, of strange sporting instincts, he permitted himself the luxury of a horse and a gig, and whenever the hounds were anywhere at hand he used to hunt on wheels—for he was gouty; but he must have suffered from "poor man's gout"—and generally contrived to see a good deal of the run; while his enthusiasm was as great as that of the best-mounted follower of Lord Stamford's hounds.

In the early weeks of 1857 Ben Boothroyd had a bad fall, so in his absence Lord Stamford carried the horn himself; and on his first day, although he lost his fox, he succeeded in having a good run, and on subsequent occasions he proved conclusively that he knew how to handle hounds. The veteran Mr. Little Gilmour

still remained faithful in his allegiance to the Quorn pack, and in following them during the season he broke his collar-bone—not the first accident he sustained in his prolonged career of riding over Leicestershire.

Ben Boothroyd hunted the hounds for one season only under Lord Stamford, for his appointment to the post of huntsman was never popular in Leicestershire. He was voted slow with the Donington, and a man must be very quick who attempts to hunt the Quorn. His place was taken at the beginning of the season 1857–58 by John Treadwell,<sup>1</sup> a first-class man in all departments, and so long as the horn was at his saddle-bow good sport was enjoyed, sometimes even against long odds; and a good Midland sportsman, who met the Quorn at Great Dalby in November 1857, declared that nothing during the day gave him greater pleasure than on arriving at the fixture to find old Tom Day, formerly huntsman to the Quorn, with Goodall, of the Belvoir, and John Treadwell engaged in careful criticism of the Quorn pack. "It was indeed a famous trio," he wrote.

At this time Ferneley, the famous painter of animals and hunting scenes—he painted the picture of Assheton Smith on Ayston, with Dick Burton and some favourite hounds—was, as he had been for some time, settled down in Melton. In the February of 1857 he was engaged on a picture representing a horse show, and

<sup>1</sup> John Treadwell, the son of James Treadwell, Mr. Farquharson's huntsman in Dorsetshire, began his hunting career in Scotland under Mr. Robertson, whipping in to his uncle, Charles Treadwell, who subsequently hunted the Bramham Moor hounds. His next place was with Major Stretton in Monmouthshire, and a year or two afterwards he went to the Hambleton, then under the mastership of Mr. Walter Long, with whom he remained for about four years before removing to the Vine, then under a committee, with Sir Richard Pycroft as field master. In 1847 he took service under Mr. Henley Greaves, first in the Cottesmore, then in the Essex country, and in 1857 became huntsman of the Quorn. On Lord Stamford giving up the country in 1863 he rejoined Mr. Henley Greaves in the Old Berks country, which he hunted until his resignation in 1882. He died in March 1895.

among the lookers-on were several Leicestershire celebrities; while Idas and the Prior, brother to Alice Hawthorne, were among the horses. "The Squire" on Assheton jumping a gate, Sir Harry Goodricke on Dr. Russell, and Mr. Holyoake on Crossbow were prominent characters in one hunting picture, while in another Sir Harry was represented on foot, while Mountford was holding his fox aloft.

"And what a fox it was," writes a critic who examined the picture. "None of those bullet-headed animals, which town artists will persist in drawing on the look-out for rabbits, but a regular racing greyhound, with a true Cream Gorse or Billesdon Coplow birthright."

A third picture was "A Scurry." It was a very long canvas of about seven feet, representing all the principal Melton men going away. Lord Wilton was leading, as he generally did, with Mr. Little Gilmour in close attendance, behind these being Captain Lloyd, Mr. Coke, and a hard-riding Russian merchant.<sup>1</sup> Five were represented as going over a gate and a hedge at one time, amongst them being the then Duke of Rutland, who was followed by Mr. (afterwards Sir Francis) Grant. This picture was to be raffled for. In the following year (1858), when Ferneley was close upon eighty years of age, he was hard at work upon a sketch of the Quorn hounds crossing the Nottingham turnpike road *en route* from Melton Spinney to Sir Harry Goodricke's Gorse; while one of his largest works was the meet of the Quorn under Assheton Smith at Shangton Holt, with Lord Plymouth and other well-known Meltonians of Assheton Smith's time (1806-17). Full of years, and by no means without honours, Mr. John E. Ferneley passed away at Melton on the 4th June 1860. His father had been a wheelwright at Thrussington, and tried to bring up his son to his trade, but the son had other aspirations.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the early eighties, a Russian merchant, Mr. Matvief, was a regular follower of the Surrey staghounds, and sometimes of the Burstow. He did not begin to ride until late in life, but he went well, and the writer saw him once jump a very awkward gate in a corner.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed notice of Ferneley, see Sir Walter Gilbey's article in *Baily's Magazine* for September 1897.

On Saturday, 27th September, Ferneley's paintings and sketches were disposed of on the late owner's premises. The catalogue contained eighty lots, consisting of sketches of hunting, shooting, deerstalking, &c.; portraits of Bay Middleton, Riddlesworth, Rowton, Attila, &c.; portraits of famous jockeys, and numerous sketches in oils made for Mr. Osbaldeston.

In September 1857 Lord Stamford lost a horse in a somewhat curious manner. Treadwell, the huntsman, was one day riding it out at exercise with the hounds, when a violent thunderstorm came on. The horse, which was much frightened, became very ill, so Treadwell dismounted and bled it; but, as it became worse instead of better, it was left at the roadside in charge of one of the whippers-in, and there it died before a veterinary surgeon could arrive. The death was attributed to palpitation of the heart, induced by the fright at the thunder and lightning.

At the opening of the season 1857-58 Melton was tolerably full, as early in November the principal studs were—Lord Wilton, 23; Mr. Coventry, 20; Mr. Lester, 13; Mr. Read, 13; Sir George Wombwell, a dozen; besides many others which did not reach double figures. "As many horses as they have at Newmarket," as an enthusiastic sportsman wrote.

As had been the case with Sir Richard Sutton and other popular masters, the course of hunting did not run quite smoothly with Lord Stamford, as we find him being warned off by a Mr. Allen, though the details are somewhat shrouded in obscurity. It seems, however, that the tenant, whoever his landlord might be, had raised some question in connection with unexhausted improvements; but as his term had yet six months more to run, it was rather premature to ask other farmers to subscribe to enforcing compensation. It would have been quite soon enough to agitate when compensation was refused.

Most racing people have heard of old Mr. Richards, who in early life (he was born at Barbers' Mill, near Nottingham, in 1776) worked at the stocking-frame. He was one of the earl's chosen bookmakers, and was first attracted to betting by winning a small sum on a horse-race. Richards was a Leicestershire man. The story goes that when resting at a village inn, while hawking stockings, he was induced to play at cards, rising the winner of a small sum, with which he next day backed a horse, with the result already mentioned. He soon attended Doncaster and Newmarket; and as the Meltonians, a good many of them at least, were much addicted to betting, Richards drove a very good business in laying them the odds to any extent. He was a curious combination, for, in addition to being wrapped up in racing, he studied standard works as seriously as though he were about to undergo an examination in them. He declared that he would never keep a servant until he was worth £500 a year. He kept his word, and in due course became so rich that he took Ragdale Hall, the beautiful residence of the seventh Earl Ferrers, and it was said that one of his motives in renting the mansion was, that he should be better in touch with the Meltonians than he could be in his native village. He died a wealthy man; left three sons in affluent circumstances; while his daughter became the wife of a clergyman, who was afterwards incumbent of the parish adjoining Ragdale. Richards is mentioned here because he was a supporter of the Quorn Hunt; and though never a hard rider, he used, when he had risen to comparatively good circumstances, to meet hounds as often as possible. He died in November 1856, when about eighty years of age.

Most of the runs which took place during the beginning of the season 1857-58 were noted rather for pace than for length, brilliant bursts being the rule.

In a sharp run from Baggrave Spinney to Whetstone, Lord Wilton, who was riding well to the fore as usual, had an ugly fall, which caused serious injury to his thigh ; but no bones being broken, he was in the saddle again in a few weeks ; and in a run which took place on the 4th December from Parson's Gorse in the Widmerpool country, Treadwell's bold riding was much approved, as for the forty-five minutes during which the run lasted he was always in the same field with his hounds, and was close to them to pick up his fox when they rolled him over. On Friday December 18th, and Saturday, December 19th, Lord Stamford's hounds enjoyed some very quick runs ; and on the latter day Mr. Little Gilmour had a bad fall through some one crossing him at a fence, that being the third he had had during the season from the same cause.

The year 1858 opened with a good run or two, but on the whole the season 1857-58 was voted a bad one. On January 11 the hounds found one fox only, but they simply raced him for about five-and-twenty minutes. On that day Treadwell was riding a horse of Lady Stamford's, his orders being to stop at no fence whatever ; and so well did Treadwell obey his instructions that he pounded even Lord Gardner, not to mention others, at a flight of double posts and rails. Lady Stamford was a fine and bold horsewoman, and in 1859 a paragraph was published in some of the newspapers which purported to be a challenge from Lady Stamford to any other lady to ride across country for £500 a side. This piece of absurdity Lord Stamford at once contradicted in the press.

There may possibly be some who hunted from Melton in the fifties who remember Mary Anne Hinman, known as the "Female Blacksmith." Of her own free will she elected to follow her father's trade, and while she assisted generally in the business, she was greatly in request for shoeing, in which art she was an adept ; and it is said that she shod half the best hunters in Melton. After a short illness she died, early in April 1858, and was buried in Melton churchyard, where can be seen (or

could be seen) a gravestone to a male blacksmith, with the following epitaph :—

My sledge and hammer lie reclined,  
 My bellows, too, have lost their wind ;  
 My fire's extinguished—forge decayed,  
 And in the dust my vice is laid ;  
 My coal is spent, my iron gone ;  
 The last nail's drove, and work is done.

If the season 1857-58 was not a particularly good one, there were at any rate some good runs in that which followed. On the 18th December 1858, Lord Stamford's hounds had a somewhat remarkable hunt of four hours and ten minutes.

They met at Bardon Hill, and no sooner were hounds in covert than a fox jumped up in view. He ran a fast ring round the covert, and then went away in the direction of Greenhill, pointing for the monastery. So quickly did he go away from the covert that many of the field did not have a good start. He soon turned to the right over some rough ground, skirted Gisborne's Gorse, left the Oaks on his right, and made his way to Garendon Park. There he was unluckily headed, so turned short to the right up to the privets, and turning equally short to the left, passed Whittle Hill and Chartley Knoll on the right, and running through Chartley Wood, reached the racks, where the fox turned to the right and this time ran through Gisborne's Gorse, and thence straight back to Bardon Hill, the return journey allowing many of those thrown out to nick in. Round Bardon Hill the fox ran a couple of rings and then he made for Green Hill, running the road for a distance ; but, on being headed, made his way back again to Bardon Hill, around which he travelled once ; then went off for the monastery, but turning to the left through Holly Knoll Wood, very nearly up to Coleville ; again bent to the left, leaving Bardon Station and the railway on the right, returning thence to his old quarters at Bardon Hill, where, thoroughly exhausted, he was run into ; the pace having been very good considering that the run lasted four hours and ten minutes with no check to speak of.

Only a few days later (23rd December 1858) the hounds met at Barrow Lodge, where foxes were so carefully tended by Mr. Shield. Finding in a covert near at hand, away went the fox as



hard as he could race to Grace Dieu, and after running by Belton village the fox was headed, and so ran along the brook for about a mile, over the road as if for Breedon Clouds, and then to the right as if for Donington Park, which place he reached after several turns. The time to that point was an hour and twenty minutes. There had been no previous check, but one occurred then. Presently Treadwell hit off the line, and eventually the hounds ran into their fox in Mr. Storey's stack-yard at Lockington village, after a hunt of two hours and twenty minutes from the start. Then on the 30th December the hounds met at Donington Park. Among those out were Lord Stanhope, Mr. Storey, Mr. Phillips, and Lord Stamford. The last-named is especially mentioned because it would appear that he was very seldom seen in the hunting field about this period, which is rather curious, seeing that he had been master of hounds before, and hunted the country at his own cost, save for the covert fund. On this occasion hounds ran for upwards of two hours and a half. Lord Stamford did not see the finish of the run, for he rode his third horse to a standstill in Robin Wood. At the invitation of Lord Stanhope, Treadwell, the whippers-in, and the hounds remained for the night at Bretby.

The records of the season 1858-59 were that with 71 couples of hounds Lord Stamford hunted 136 days (no blank days), killed 15 brace of cubs, 23½ brace of foxes, and ran 37 brace to ground.

Almost from the very first there appears to have been a kind of misunderstanding between Lord Stamford and some people in the country, and during the season 1858-59 there was a rumour, which certainly appears to have been to a certain extent well founded, that Lord Stamford would give up the country; then he agreed to continue in office, and so the country's mind was set at ease again. Another rumour was that the Old Club, which had been unoccupied for a short time, would be taken by Sir George Wombwell and some of his friends, an arrangement which does not appear to have been carried out.

The year 1859 saw the death of two men who in

their time played a prominent part in the history of the chase—within a twelvemonth the fifth Earl of Jersey and the Marquis of Waterford joined the great majority. Mention has already been made of Lord Jersey, who was a notability both in the hunting field and on the turf. Time had been when the Marquis of Waterford was as well known at Melton as any one who ever made the place his hunting headquarters. Clothed in his blue jacket and black cap, and mounted on Yellow Dwarf, he was a prominent figure at the first few steeplechases held in the vale of Aylesbury. According to all accounts he rode “anyhow,” and except there was some indication of the line to be taken, his idea of steeplechase riding appeared to be to jump over as many fences as possible. Once, when he was riding in a steeplechase at Dunchurch against Dick Christian, he went so wide at a turning-flag to get a run at a tempting-looking fence that Dick called out, “My lord! where *are* you going to?” He was then riding Columbine. How he put the Melton toll-bar into the not altogether appropriate scarlet, how he aniseeded the heels of a clergyman’s horse and then hunted him home with bloodhounds, are stories which have been told over and over again. Then, in consequence of a practical joke on a Norwegian peasant-girl, the marquis was so much knocked about by the Norwegian watchmen that he had to wear a wig for some time, and in a fast run with the Quorn from Burrough Hill he lost this same headpiece. The marquis was a great ally of deaf Burke, by whom he was taught boxing. He won three four-mile steeplechases in one day at Eglinton Park, entered heart and soul into the tournament, and did many other things which amused England at the time. For the last seventeen years or so of his life he lived at home in Ireland, where he kept the Curraghmore hounds, which were a capital hunting pack, if not very much to look at. He and his men,

however, were wonderfully well mounted, and they had plenty of horses apiece, so that his great sales came to be regarded as an annual function. He seldom ran a horse in England unless he had something he deemed good enough to have a chance for a great race, but on the Irish turf he was a prominent character. The Marquis of Waterford met his death out hunting in March 1859. According to some accounts he was riding his best horse ; according to others he was on a middling hunter. At any rate, the fence which proved fatal to him was a very small one into a road. The horse made a mistake at it, and the marquis came with such violence to the ground that he broke his neck. He was wearing a hunting cap at the time, and it was said that this stiff headgear saved his head at the expense of his neck ; and the story goes that this doctrine had a good deal to do with sending caps out of fashion, just as black satin ceased to be worn after Mrs. Manning elected to wear that material at her execution.

The latter end of 1859 saw the publication of an engraving (by Hacker) of Dick Christian mounted on Mr. Little Gilmour's Lord Grey, which was lent to Dick in order that he might sit to the artist. No sooner was the engraving published and Lord Grey talked about than several people claimed to have bred him ; indeed, like two distinguished persons of our own time, he appears to have had several birthplaces. As Dick Christian himself observed, Lord Grey, like his master, was very bad to beat over Leicestershire. Whatever may be the history of his breeding, the story of his later years appears to be plain enough. Mr. Garratt, of Knossington, bought him out of a drove at Harborough—a fact which would have entitled him to be described in a horse-show catalogue as "breeder unknown." Mr. Garratt "played with him for a season," and then sold him to Mr. Gattring of Orton, near Newark, from whom

he passed into the hands of Mr. Hunter of Thorpe Arnolds. One day Mr. Gilmour did not like the brown horse which had been sent on to Six Hills for his riding, and seeing the grey, he asked to get on him, and, having had a ride, liked him so much that he bought him for, it is said, £170; "the pair," as Dick Christian remarked, "have never been out of flying things since I've known 'em." Dick was at that time rising eighty-one, and had nothing to depend upon except the kindness of his friends; and the picture appears to have been brought out in order that the old man might reap some advantage from the sale thereof.

The year 1860 opened with a piece of good news for Leicestershire fox-hunters. The antipathy to fox-hunting of the late Lord Harborough was well known, and whenever hounds found themselves on the outskirts of Stapleford Park, they had to be whipped off. Lord Harborough's coverts were swarming with game, which of late years he never shot himself, and his plantations were defended by quite a *chevaux de frise* of dog-spears, which would have sufficed to destroy a whole pack, had they entered the coverts. Soon after Lord Harborough's death, Lady Harborough earned the gratitude of Leicestershire hunting men by abolishing the dog-spears and throwing open Stapleford and its coverts to any hounds which might run thither.

Since November 1859 scent had been catchy, and with the exception of a few short and sharp runs, not very much sport had been enjoyed; but on the 27th January 1860 hounds ran for two hours and killed; while a little later Mr. Bullen of Eastwell, a fine specimen of a sporting parson, when riding in a foremost position in a run from Six Hills, sustained a bad fall and broke his collar-bone.

The chief residents in and around Melton determined at once to make social life as pleasurable as possible, and

also to benefit the local charities as some acknowledgment of favours received from the farmers. So far as can be discovered, the month of March 1860 saw the inauguration of the first amateur theatricals in Melton, and they were continued for several years. In the last week in March there took place in the Corn Exchange an "essentially sporting entertainment provided for and by the lovers of the chase."

With a view to increase the funds of the local charities, the Hon. Seymour Egerton, himself an accomplished musician,<sup>1</sup> had at his resource the best talent. Mr. Clarke, stage manager at Windsor, had the management of the theatricals, while the scenery, decorations, &c., were produced under his directions by native talent. Lord and Lady Grey de Wilton, Mr. and Lady Mary Craven, the Ladies Catherine and Alice Egerton, Mr. E. B. Hartopp, M.P., Captain Hartopp, and Mr. Evans Hartopp were the principal performers. The prologue, written by Captain Hartopp and spoken by Lord Grey de Wilton, is so good that no apology is needed for its reproduction here.

"Kind auditors, bear with me while I say  
 A few words on the subject of our play.  
 In metaphoric strain, 'tis known full well  
 By all who in this sporting country dwell,  
 How oftentimes, when riding at a brook,  
 Upon the ghastly chasm as you look,  
 Whose banks are rotten, and whose waters deep  
 (Although you quail not at the desperate leap),  
 This anxious thought will rise your breast within,  
 'I may get over—but I may get in.'  
 Such are our feelings, coming within sight  
 Of such an audience as is here to-night.  
 This night's performance is the brook we near—  
 Our own deficiencies the fall we fear ;  
 Success the banks, towards which our efforts tend ;  
 Failure the waters that our hopes may end.  
 So ere we leap, we earnestly appeal  
 To you bystanders, hoping that you'll feel

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<sup>1</sup> He was at the head of the Wandering Minstrels, a society which often delighted London audiences.

Some pity for our fate, if we fall short,  
 Failing to reach the eminence we sought.  
 Then, if we falter as we near the brink,  
 Let friendly hands support us, or we sink,  
 Let friendly cheers our energies sustain,  
 And if we flounder, help us out again.  
 'Then by your aid 'Still Waters' we'll get through,  
 Our 'Dreams then of the Future' be of you,  
 For you shall 'Pillicoddy' play his pranks,  
 While 'Betsy Baker' tenders you her thanks.  
 Strong with knowledge that we've friends at hand,  
 Boldly we'll leap—and safely we shall land."

The applause was great when Lord Grey de Wilton retired, and then came the overture. "Still Waters Run Deep" and "Betsy Baker" were the pieces played, while the music included a violin solo by the Hon. Seymour Egerton and a cornet solo by Mr. A. B. Mitford. On the following evening (Thursday) the programme included "A Dream of the Future" and "Poor Pillicoddy," while the instrumental soloists were the Hon. Catherine Egerton (pianoforte), Mr. Robley (violoncello), and Mr. Le Patourel (flute). In "The Dream of the Future" a sporting turn was given to the proceedings by the introduction of the names, in connection with the evening party in the play, of Dr. Scraptoft, Lord Ranksboro', Mr. Thrussington Gorse, Sir Bescoby and Lady Oaks, Mr. B. Coplow, and Mr. and Mrs. Tilton Wood. Lord Grey de Wilton, Lord Gerald Fitzgerald, and Hon. H. Coke were among those who were members of the orchestra; the musical programme included Mendelssohn's Symphony in A minor and Concerto in G minor, overtures to "Zanetta," "William Tell," and "Oberon," while the incidental music was composed by the Hon. Seymour Egerton. Amongst those present were the Duke of Rutland, Lord and Lady Forester, Hon. G. Fitzwilliam, Earl and Countess of Westmorland, Countess of Sefton and the Ladies Molyneaux, Lord Stanhope, the Hon. Mrs. Villiers, Lady Hampton, Sir Henry Edwards, Sir Frederick and Lady Fowke, Countess of Craven, Marquis of Hartington, Countess of Chesterfield, Sir Walter and Lady Carew, Lord and Lady Newport, Lord and Lady Colville, Lady E. Stanhope, Lady Wallace, Hon. F. Morgan, Captain Morgan, Mr. Cheeney (High Sheriff), &c.

In the following year (1861) there were more private theatricals, but the festival extended to three days instead of two. "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing," "The Mummy," and "The

Critic" were played on the first night; there was a promenade concert on the second day; while "Prison and Palace," "Shocking Events," and "Whitebait at Greenwich" were in the bill for the concluding day; and in the last act of the first piece Lady Catherine Egerton appeared on the stage on horseback in the character of the Empress of Russia. On each day of these entertainments hounds hunted, the fields were large by reason of the number of visitors staying in and around Melton, and the festival week wound up with a very good performance of the Messiah!

To return, however, to hunting, Count Batthyany, after being an absentee for several years, reappeared at Melton and lost no time in building a Turkish bath (erected under the supervision of Mr. Johnson, architect, of Melton Mowbray) as an aid to conditioning his horses. By-and-by he succeeded to the title of Prince, and died at Newmarket towards the close of April 1883. Like most of his countrymen, Prince Batthyany was greatly attached to horses and field sports generally; and when he first joined the Melton contingent he set himself the task of emulating the feats of the Marquis of Waterford, Lord Macdonald, Colonel Charetie, Squire Osbaldeston, Mr. Powell, and other first flight men. He rode boldly and well, but was unable to beat those just mentioned, though he always took a good place. Of his riding on the turf a good deal might be said, but that would be to branch out too far.

The month of April 1860 saw the decease of the wealthy Mr. Lyne Stephens, formerly a well-known Meltonian. He was said to be the richest commoner in England, and when he hunted from Melton, from about 1832 to 1836, his stud was second to none, for no price ever stopped him. From all accounts, however, he was a wretched horseman, and could never show to advantage in a run.

In 1860 Lord Stamford again threatened to resign at the end of the season 1860-61, being taken so seriously ill as to cause Lord Berners, Lord Cardigan,

and some others to call a meeting of owners of coverts and others interested in hunting the two divisions of the country, to consider whether it was expedient to make any, and if so what, alterations in the boundaries of the two countries hunted by Lord Stamford and Mr. Tailby. This brought forth an explanation from Lord Stamford.

As the circumstances relating to my giving up the hounds have met with various interpretations, I will briefly state the facts, in order that those gentlemen connected with the Hunt may see how I have been situated. About two years since I was informed that the covert fund could not be raised; and at that time I hinted if such were the case another season I should be obliged to relinquish the mastership of the Quorn hounds. This year the committee made known to me, through one of its members, that they would be obliged to give notice to the owners of coverts of their intention of giving them up, owing to the lack of funds and the unwillingness of the gentlemen of the Hunt to subscribe. I felt that I could no longer act as master of the Quorn hounds, and gave notice to that effect. Within the last fortnight, however, a deputation from the committee, consisting of Messrs. Farnham, Herrick, and Clowes, came to me and entered into an explanation showing satisfactorily that the whole difficulty arose from a want of exertion on the part of the committee in not applying for subscriptions at the right time, and exonerating the gentlemen of the Hunt from any sordid motives. On hearing this, and being assured by them that in future no such obstacle should occur, I considered I could not do less than continue to hunt the country as before, and I feel happy to think that the differences between myself and the committee have come to such a favourable termination.

There is not much else to record in connection with the closing days of the season 1860-61, except that in March 1861 the Hon. A. Coventry, while riding to covert in company with Miss and Mr. Arthur Coventry, broke his leg by coming in contact with a stout stake in a small fence over which the party were making a short cut. After meeting at Beeby on All Fools'



Day, hounds found a fox at Billesdon Coplow and ran him with scarcely a check almost to Shangton Holt, when Treadwell hit off the line again and the pack pulled down their fox near Kibworth, after a run of two hours and twenty minutes.

It was in the year 1860 that the Bradgate Park testimonial was proposed and carried out. As the inscription explained, it was "presented to the Earl and Countess of Stamford and Warrington by the inhabitants of Leicester." The gift took the form of a silver rosewater dish of elaborate design—so elaborate, indeed, that an official description is perhaps worth reproducing.

The body of the dish or salver is divided into four compartments or panels, which are tastefully separated one from the other by groups of dead fish and game, and by cricketing and sporting trophies. These are cleverly looped to foxes' heads by graceful festoons of fruits and flowers. The first compartment or panel is allegorical, or Britannia offering the benefit of commerce to the four quarters of the globe. In the background is a correct view of Leicester Corn Exchange, smoking factories, &c., thereby identifying the various trades of the town with the testimonial. The second compartment represents a picture of the far-famed old oak-tree in Bradgate Park, under the delightful shade of which is seen a happy picnic party, the ruins of the old castle forming a picturesque background. The third panel suggests hunting, a sport famous to the county. The Quorn foxhounds are in full cry; the earl and countess, enjoying the invigorating pastime, are riding side by side. The fourth and remaining compartment is a faithful representation of Bradgate House. The whole is surrounded by a very rich and beautiful border in which is represented a fox-hunt—the horsemen, hounds, fox, &c., being exquisitely chiselled; while to prevent the eye from tiring and to relieve the composition, it is divided by shields upon which are prominently chased the arms of the town of Leicester and the crest and coronet of the Earl and Countess.

The designer of this dish certainly deserves all credit for his ingenuity, for a more inclusive specimen of the silversmith's craft can hardly be imagined.

In preparation for the next season Captain Callander bought the Toy House; and the Old Club, which had been occupied by the Hon. Major Morgan, was taken by Count Batthyany. The gorse planted by Sir Harry Goodricke had been burned and grubbed up, and though in some quarters there were laments over the destruction of the once favourite covert, Lord Stamford was held to have acted rightly, as the unsportsmanlike conduct of a neighbouring occupier had for some years prevented its ever holding a fox. Who this unneighbourly person was we are not told; but to supply the place of Sir Harry's Gorse, a new covert was made about a mile further on. A Mr. Day appears to have taken the coverts in hand; those requiring it were fresh drained, and other steps were taken to make the different coverts attractive to foxes. The season was on the whole a good one, the Quorn having killed 69½ brace of foxes in 101 days, and there were no blank days.

In August 1861 there was a foxhound show at Yarm in connection with the show of the Cleveland Agricultural Society. There had been a previous show at Leeds, but it appeared that masters of foxhounds had declined to show there because, as a chronicler said, they did not like "to allow their favourites to be mixed up with the canine *canaille*. Perhaps, also, they may have had an idea that flags were essential to fair judging." The arrangements at Yarm, however, met with general approval, and of fourteen entries in class two, for the best couple of foxhounds not younger than one season nor older than two season hunters, the Quorn were highly commended; but in class four, for the best puppy of 1860, Lord Stamford's Blue Bell, by Statesman—Blissful, was first.

In the autumn of 1861 the railway companies appear to have turned their attention to the accommodation of hunting men, but members of Parliament were their first

care, as in their interest they started a train from London to Melton Mowbray, which reached the latter place at ten o'clock; now it is possible to reach there at a few minutes before eight, travelling by the newspaper train. The Quorn hounds appear to have had a run of sport in December 1861, and on the 14th of that month it will be remembered that the Prince Consort died. The news reached Leicestershire on Sunday night, but it was not generally known until the arrival of the Monday's papers; meantime a great number of horses had been sent on to Thornley, where, instead of the hounds, those who had ridden to the covert-side found a mounted messenger from Lord Stamford, who stated that, owing to the death of the prince, no hunting would take place. The sad event threw a general gloom over the Midlands, as over the rest of England; for the prince, if not an enthusiastic fox-hunter, had on occasions been seen at the covert-side in Leicestershire, and as a master of harriers had played his part as a sportsman.

The threatened resignation of Lord Stamford appears to have given the covert-fund question the impetus it so much needed; but the country at large sadly wished that Mr. John Moore were back again. When that able hunting tactician was a power in Melton, he collected within a very small radius of that town nearly £3000, and, on one occasion, nearly £3500, for Mr. Assheton Smith; but Mr. Moore took very good care to produce his note-book on the opening day at Kirby Gate, and his importunities never ceased until he had made up his amount. However, at the time of which we are speaking matters appear to have been in a hopeless muddle, until at last, owing to Lord Stamford's strong representations, something had to be done; so Sir Henry Edwards (on behalf of the Meltonian division), Mr. Clowes, Mr. Bruce Campbell, and Mr. John Day formed

themselves into a committee to place things on a better footing. In Mr. Day the committee had a valuable coadjutor, as he had previously for many years looked after the coverts. Cream Gorse and Barkby Holt needed money to be expended upon them; and it was agreed that sundry alterations should be made, including the planting of a gorse of ten acres; while some coverts were doomed, including Munday's Gorse, which was done away with, as in some places coverts were thought to be too near together to improve the chance of enjoying a straight-away run. This new broom promised to sweep very clean, but it was not effectual in keeping Lord Stamford at the head of the hounds for more than a short time longer.

In February 1862 the master appears to have been again troubled with unruly fields, and on one occasion took his hounds home; but the sting was somewhat taken out of the rebuke by the fact that the day was far advanced. The hounds had met at Beeby, and after a disappointing day they drew John o' Gaunt late in the afternoon; found a fox, and from the manner in which hounds ran in covert and in a short ring in the open, it appeared as though scent had improved and a gallop might take place after all. Unluckily, however, the field were so elated that they greatly interfered with the hounds; so Lord Stamford ordered the hounds back to kennel, and declared that he would not hunt that side of the country any more during the season. In this particular, however, he relented, and did go there again. When meeting at Barkby they had a good run from Thorpe Trussels, the fox leading them over the swollen Wreake. Following the example of the fox, Lord Grey de Wilton plunged in and emerged safely on the other side. He was followed by Captain Williams, who, before making the crossing, handed his watch to a friend, thereby taking it for granted that the friend intended

going for a bridge or a ford. The field was regularly spread-eagled.

The fox made his way by the right of Kettleby, as if for Holwell Mouth, and sunset was taking place by the time the hounds reached Piper Hole in the Belvoir country. There the fox might have saved himself, had it not been that a sheep-dog saw him taking refuge under a hedge and at once made for him. The fox was fairly blown, and setting his back against the hedge prepared for battle with the sheep-dog, and while the pair were engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter the hounds came up and finished off the fox.

No more than a few days later Lord Stamford's hounds were in danger of being run into whilst hunting on the Midland line, near Ashfordby Station. The master, on seeing an approaching train, made signals to the driver to stop, which he did at remarkably short notice, seeing that neither Westinghouse nor Vacuum brakes were then invented. Lord Stamford at once put his hand in his pocket and liberally acknowledged the good offices of driver and fireman; but, in extracting the necessary amount, the master also pulled out a five-pound note, which fluttered unobserved to the ground. Charles Wells, stud-groom to Mr. Little Gilmour, passed over the crossing and, seeing the paper on the ground, dismounted, picked it up and put it in his pocket, telling Mr. Gilmour, on his return home, what he had found. Through Mr. Gilmour's inquiries the owner of the note was discovered; but Lord Stamford would not take it back, his directions to Mr. Little Gilmour being to give a couple of sovereigns to his groom, and the balance to the clergyman of the parish for the benefit of the poor.

During the season 1861-62 Lord Stamford came out oftener, is said to have ridden better, and to have taken more interest in the Hunt than before, and a writer of the period says he was so popular that "farmers rejoice to see him cross their land, and villagers send forth

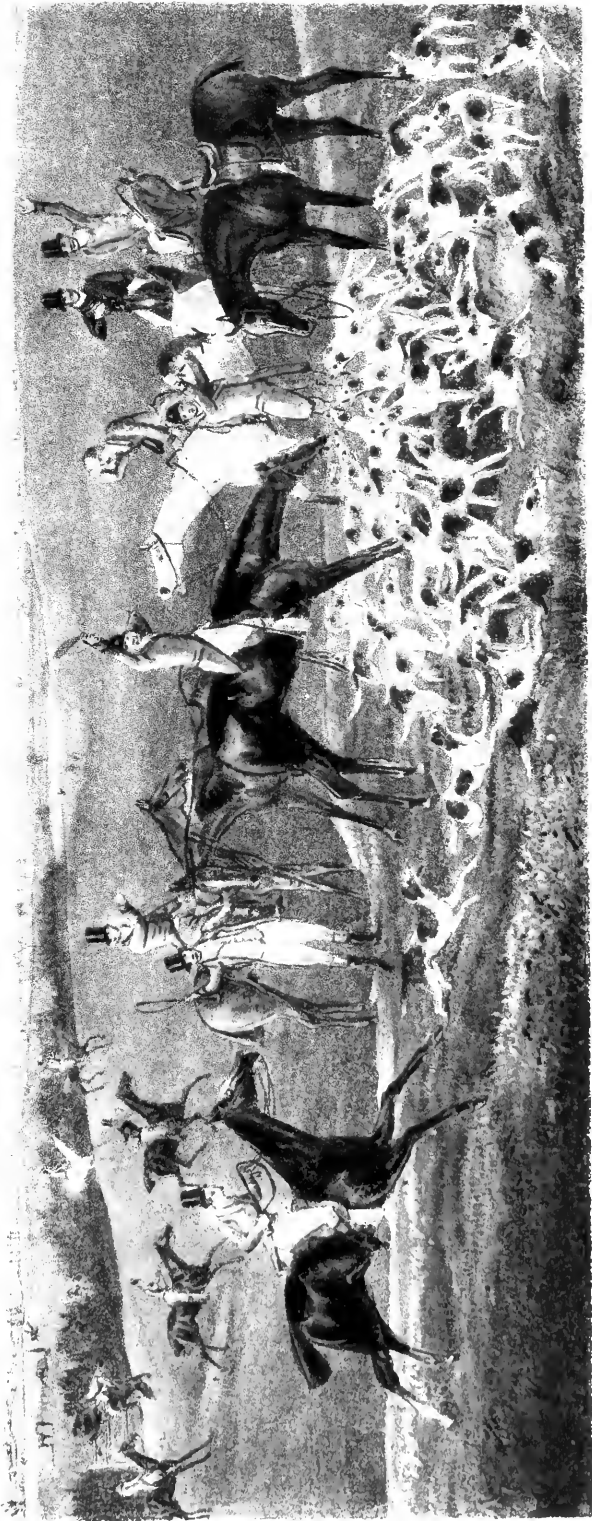
merry peals from the church bells when he honours them with a meet."

This custom of bell-ringing when the hounds met at any particular village gave rise to a law case at the County Public Office, Leicester, early in April 1862.

Mr. D. Waite, a farmer of Thurnby, appeared to answer a charge preferred against him by the Rev. J. C. K. Redhead, vicar of the parish, for having on the 27th February been guilty of violent and indecent behaviour in breaking open the belfry door of the parish church. According to the evidence it appeared that ever since the year 1857 it had been the custom of the churchwardens of the parish, on the occasion of Lord Stamford's hounds meeting there, to ring the church bells in honour of his lordship. When, however, the hounds met on this particular 27th February, the vicar gave directions that the bells should not be rung, adding that if his orders were disobeyed he should take legal proceedings against the offending parties. The hounds were to meet on the Monday, so on the evening of the preceding Sunday the reverend gentleman nailed down the latch of the belfry door, and took the precaution of locking the door and tying the key in it. At seven o'clock on Monday morning the sporting farmer ordered the parish constable, who chanced to be a wheelwright, to open the door, which was accomplished by lifting it off its hinges; the ringers then went into the belfry and for two hours or more rang a merry peal in honour of Lord Stamford and his hounds. The vicar, as may be supposed, was in a great state of rage during the proceedings; but the magistrates dismissed the case, greatly to the satisfaction of the fox-hunting fraternity, though the ecclesiastical lawyer may perhaps be puzzled to account for the decision.

The season 1861-62, though not productive of so much sport as the previous season, was fairly good, and there was a plentiful supply of foxes.

One curious incident of the season 1861-62 deserves mention. A fox was found in Donington Park, or rather he stole away before the hounds entered the covert, and in the course of the run which ensued he picked up a rabbit, and actually carried it for some distance, but finding the hounds too close and the burden



Honble. Col. Louchie.

Mr. Osbaldeston.

Jack Stevens.

Sir James Mackenzie.

THE DEATH. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.





too heavy, he wisely dropped his prize and continued on his way. The incident was vouched for by several people.

In the summer of 1862, that is to say, on the Thursday between the Derby and Oaks days, there died a very notable Leicestershire character—none other than Dick Christian, who, in the words of “The Druid,” had practically sounded the depth of every ditch and brook in Leicestershire. On Christmas Day 1860 he was seized with a fit, with no one near him but his little grandchild, and since that time he had been quite helpless and bedridden, and lay supported by a frame on his bed, with a pulley by which he moved himself. His last three days were attended by intense pain, and he was buried in the little Dissenters’ burial-ground nearly opposite his house. What his age was is somewhat uncertain, but at the time of his death he was probably eighty-five. He rode a good many steeplechases, though perhaps he was not at his best in that department. To give Dick Christian his due, he never laid claim to qualities he did not possess. He whipped in to Sir Gilbert Heathcote of the Cottesmore for some time, and occasionally, when Abbey, the huntsman, was unable to go out, he hunted the hounds. He admitted that he could not blow a horn well and had “only a middling voice.” In one of his conversations with “The Druid”<sup>1</sup> he said:—

“I once made a bit of a bit when I had hold of the hounds, just over a road. Lord Lonsdale was out. ‘Richard,’ he says (he always spoke that way), ‘Richard, that’s as fine a cast as I ever saw made; you quite deceived me.’ We brought the fox from Mankrie Wood close to the Bull at Witham Common, seven or eight miles, slap through Woodwell Head right away to Melton Spinney. My horse was so beat he could just trot—that was all he could do.”

<sup>1</sup> “Silk and Scarlet,” p. 16.

Dick Christian's forte was making hunters. From all accounts he was not a first-class steeplechase rider ; but up to a certain point in his life he had a wonderfully good nerve, and he was constantly put on rough horses with orders to turn aside from nothing, and he certainly carried out his directions. He jumped over a whole flock of sheep, and rode the mare Marigold over a most extraordinary drop fence, Marigold<sup>1</sup> being a mare which had given a succession of breakers no little trouble. He always maintained that he had never ridden a better horse than Corringham ; but no valid reason was ever forthcoming for this preference, seeing that for about twenty years at Melton he rode the best horses that a farmer could breed or a dealer could buy. For about eighteen years he was in the employ of Lord Scarborough, and he made all his horses ; but from various accounts Dick Christian never rode in either the Rufford or the Grove countries as he rode in Leicestershire. In the Quorn country he once killed a horse belonging to Mr. Frank Foljambe, an occurrence which long haunted him ; " It was the only horse that ever died in my hands," he used to say. On the opening day of the season 1857-58 Dick made his appearance at Kirby Gate, where he held quite a levee. Mr. Leslie, to whom his son was groom, gave him an occasional mount afterwards, but otherwise he was never at the covert-side ; when he did come out he never attempted to ride, so it seems quite a mistake to suppose that he rode boldly up to the last. One of his biographers says that he was extravagant, but a man in his position, with twenty children " all born alive and christened," could not have saved much. His language is said to have been particularly free from anything like coarseness, and in his way he was a decided humorist. Before his death, more than one appeal was made for funds to enable him to end his days in com-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 190.

parative comfort, and they met with a generous response ; but his wife died at an advanced age in the workhouse, some years after her husband's decease.

In the November of 1862 it was quite well understood that Lord Stamford would vacate the Quorn country at the end of the season, and it was said that John Treadwell would remain on as huntsman with Lord Stamford's successor ; but this rumour proved to be untrue, as when Lord Stamford finally gave up the Quorn country Treadwell left and took service under his old master, Mr. Henley Greaves, who was then hunting the old Berkshire country ; and there he remained from 1863 until 1882, when he resigned, having hunted under several masters, including the Messrs. Charles and Thomas Duffield, and Lord Craven. Treadwell died in 1895, and was buried at Kingston Bagpuze, Berkshire, in a grave not far from that of his old master, Mr. Thomas Duffield, under whom he worked for about nine seasons. At every Hunt dinner in the old Berkshire country, one or other of the speakers paid a tribute of praise to Treadwell's skill as a huntsman, and expressed himself grateful for the sport shown. In 1878 he was presented with a silver teapot, a hunting watch, and a purse of 600 guineas. At the time of his death he was seventy-three years of age.

As Lord Stamford's last season drew to a close some very fair sport was enjoyed. During the month of March 1863 a goodly number of afternoon runs took place, and about the middle of the month they had a very fast thing from Lord Aylesford's covert down to the river below Hoby. They crossed the water close to the spot where on a former occasion Lords Gardner and Brudenell swam their horses across. On this occasion no one attempted the passage by water, so by common assent the whole of the large field galloped up towards the Old Mill to a footbridge. It appeared, as

an eye-witness wrote, almost as great a risk to cross by this bridge as to swim the river ; but all went safely over, and as the hounds luckily came to a check above Rotherby, the foremost of the field were enabled to catch them up before they killed their fox near the Leicester turnpike road.

Lord Stamford had for seven years hunted the country in such liberal style and so efficiently that it struck "A Notts Fox-hunter" his lordship's retirement should be marked by the presentation of a testimonial. Whether the suggestion did not emanate from the proper quarter, or whether there was some other reason for the apathy which prevailed, the writer has not been able to discover ; but the idea does not appear to have been taken up, and no presentation was then made.

Lord Stamford's last advertised day was Friday the 27th of March, Garenden Park being the fixture. The ground was as hard as a paving-stone, but the wind had veered round to the north ; there was no bright sun, so people hoped that the end of the season might be marked with a run.

An old dog fox went away directly and, at a good pace, ran as if for Charnwood Forest, by Chartley and the rocky steeps of Beacon Hill, through Ratcliffe, Bradgate Park, under the old ruins and over the brook by Grooby Lake, his point apparently being Enderby. Turning to the left the fox crossed some hard and dusty fallows, over which hounds had to hunt so slowly that every one began to think sport was over for the day. A capital sportsman, however, who lived at Charnwood, viewed the fox ; Lord Stamford blew his horn, and hounds again began to run, the line being through the Sandhills, Bradgate Park, up to Swithland, where, after a run of two hours and twenty minutes, the fox was pulled down near the brook. At the suggestion of Mr. Heygate, M.P., three cheers were given for the master and another cheer was added for Treadwell. Then Mr. Clowes, in a few well-chosen words, thanked the master for the munificent and noble manner in which he had hunted the country for the last seven seasons, and for the sport he had afforded.

It was said at the time that Leicestershire had never known a more popular master of hounds than Lord Stamford, and there was every reason, it was stated, to think that his lordship would have continued to hunt the country but from a feeling of annoyance or disappointment with certain nameless owners of coverts who had promised to preserve foxes for him, but had failed to carry out what they had professed themselves ready to do.

Lord Stamford's sale took place at Quorn on Saturday the 9th May 1863. Messrs Tattersall, who conducted the proceedings, expected no more than about a couple of thousand persons, and made arrangements for that number.

They found, however, that a great many more would be present, and so set about putting up some substantial posts and rails, around which about seven thousand persons assembled. Colonel Thomas, well known in the Heythrop country, had run down to Quorn during the previous week to see if there was anything likely to suit the Prince of Wales, and as the result of his report General Hood gave 500 guineas for Bentinck, and 310 guineas for the Right Man. Trumpeter's reserve price was 600 guineas. With one or two exceptions all the horses brought as much as, or more than, they originally cost, and the total sum realised by seventy-nine horses was 14,350 guineas, giving an average of nearly 182 guineas each. The Prince of Orange intended being present, but he missed his train. Special trains were run from Derby, Leicester, and other places, while there was a great collection of horse-boxes at Barrow Station for the convenience of purchasers. The late Mr. Edmund Tattersall conducted the sale. The Emperor of the French sent over Mr. Gamble, the superintendent of the Royal stables at the Louvre; but it is believed that he went home without buying anything. Among those present were the Duke of Buccleuch, Lords Henry Bentinck, Middleton, Galway, Dacre, and Eglinton; the Marquis of Hastings, Lord Algernon St. Maur (afterwards Duke of Somerset), Lords Ingestre, Gardner, Harrington, Hopetoun, Sir F. Johnstone, Mr. Clowes, Mr. George Lane Fox, Mr. Hall, Mr. W. G. Craven, &c.

This was a very remarkable sale of hunters, the horses being all of the very highest class. That Lord Stamford meant to do well by the Quorn Hunt is apparent from the fact that he gave £500 a year towards the maintenance of the hounds when Mr. Clowes took them over.

Lord Stamford, who died early in 1883, was born at Enville Hall, in Staffordshire, in 1827, so that he was only just thirty years old when he took the Quorn country in 1858 under the circumstances already noted.

George Harry Grey was the eldest of five children, three of whom predeceased him. In early years he was sent to the famous school near Hatfield of the Rev. B. Peile, under whose care many young noblemen and men of good family were placed. At Mr. Peile's he had for companions the present Duke of Westminster, Lord Derby, Lord Lichfield, Lord Harewood, Lord Howe, and many other well-known men, sportsmen and otherwise. Lord Stamford was never at a public school, going direct from Mr. Peile's to Cambridge. His ancestor, Henry de Grey, is said<sup>1</sup> to have carried the horn in the time of Richard I., and following in the steps of his ancestor, Lord Stamford had in him the interest of an ardent fox-hunter, and soon after attaining his majority he hunted the Albrighton country for a time from Enville Hall, and then he took the Quorn country in the circumstances mentioned above.

Lord Stamford was a great cricketer, and played a good deal at Lords, while at Enville Hall he laid out a private ground which was considered quite equal to any in England.

Shooting, too, was another of Lord Stamford's favourite pursuits. At both Enville Hall and Bradgate Park much excellent sport was enjoyed, though at neither place was game ever sacrificed to foxes, and his lordship's records<sup>2</sup> show that foxes and pheasants can live together if it be intended that they should do so. It

<sup>1</sup> See *Field*, January 6, 1883.

<sup>2</sup> On the 15th December 1856, and four following days, shooting parties varying from eight to eleven guns shot 3666 head, of which 1388 were pheasants, 1164 hares, 1010 rabbits, 47 partridges, and 35 woodcock. In

was owing to his shooting in Scotland that his death was attributed. He rented the deer forest of Aviemore, near Glenmore, and having built a new wing to the lodge, he proceeded to live in the lately erected portion before the place was dry ; he contracted a chill, and a bad attack of typhoid fever supervened ; but he recovered from that. His constitution, however, was greatly weakened by what he had gone through, and at Newmarket, whither he went on his return from the North, he was quite a wreck. Thus passed away a great sportsman, a kind landlord, and an extremely popular master of hounds.

January 1857 there was a shooting party at Bradgate Park, when on some days nine guns, on others eleven, killed in seven days no fewer than 7119 head, 2087 being pheasants, 523 hares, and 4394 rabbits. From November 11 to 20, both dates inclusive, Lord Stamford and party killed 889 partridges, 1076 pheasants, 1403 hares, and 593 rabbits.







## CHAPTER X

MR. CLOWES (1863-1866)

MARQUIS OF HASTINGS (1866-1868)

MR. JOHN CHAWORTH MUSTERS (1868-1870)



## CHAPTER X

### MR. CLOWES

1863-1866

THE successor to Lord Stamford was Mr. Clowes, and at the outset one may be permitted to say that never did a good sportsman have more wretched luck to contend against. It may rather be taking the end of the story first, but perhaps a summary of his mastership will in a manner explain what follows.

So far as horses, hounds, and foxes were concerned, chance favoured him. Very **few** horses were killed; one of them, however, was Goddard's favourite hunter, which met its end in the Widmerpool country, and the other two were less important animals. But the weather was absolutely against Mr. Clowes from first to last. He bought Lord Stamford's pack for £2000, collected together a capital stud of horses, and started with every prospect of success. In his very first season, however, that is to say, 1863-64, after Christmas, frost and snow spoiled all the fun and neutralised all the master's exertions; and this bad weather lasted into March, for even his last day was postponed through a heavy fall of snow.

In the next season the exceptionally dry summer and autumn reduced cub-hunting almost to a farce, for the hounds could hunt a cub no further than they could see him, and when November came round the land was as hard as it could well be. There was not a scrap of scent, and then when rain did come in December, it was

accompanied by such hurricanes of wind that sport was out of the question. Frost and snow held sway in January and February, and then the country rapidly dried up after the beginning of March. Mr. Clowes's last season was a decided improvement on the other two in many respects, but instead of hard, they had to put up with deep ground, for horses went up to their hocks in mud from the beginning of November, and hunting was scarcely stopped at all by reason of frost.

To a certain extent the deep ground was an advantage, as the greatest "thrusters" in Leicestershire could not manage to override the hounds; and, like a good sportsman, Mr. Clowes took advantage of the open season to hunt the country very fairly from one end to the other. The master hunted four days a week, but that was thought scarcely sufficient for so wide a country, in order that the owners of coverts from Staunton Harold to John o' Gaunt might be satisfied.

Towards the end of his last season several coverts on the Donington side were blank, especially Breedon Clouds and the Aspinalls; Scraftoft Gorse, too, failed to hold as a rule, and that was rather a serious matter, as several little coverts round about drew their supplies from that famous stronghold. Many people thought that the vulpicide had been at his unwelcome work, but from several accounts it seems that the foxes had forsaken many of their usual haunts, and no one knew where to find them. Sometimes they were kicked up out of the open fields, at others they were started out of the hedgerows. All the Leicestershire men sympathised most sincerely with Mr. Clowes in his run of ill-luck.

Before the resignation of Lord Stamford (as will presently appear), Mr. Clowes had worked hard in the interests of the Quorn Hunt, taking upon his shoulders sundry burdens; and when he agreed to succeed Lord Stamford he knew how much trouble he would have to

face, but like the good sportsman that he was, he ran all the risks and met with a very poor return, owing to the weather.

Not for the first time during Mr. Clowes's mastership did the question of wire-fencing come up for argument, and in the autumn of the new master's first season (1863-64) a manifesto was put forth by sundry land-owners and sportsmen in the counties of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire stating that they had observed with deep regret the increasing practice of fencing with wire as a substitute for rails, as well as for stopping gaps. They pointed out that this new kind of fencing was dangerous both to men and horses, and that, if persisted in, it would entirely put a stop to hunting. The signatories to the document could not for a moment imagine that the farmers in general would desire such an eventuality, and they hoped that the tenant-farmers would consider whether it would not be advisable to discontinue the use of wire, at least from November to April. Shortly after, however, in the columns of the *Field*, that is to say, in the issue of November 7, 1863, there appeared a letter in favour of wire-fencing, penned by Mr. E. A. Paget.<sup>1</sup>

Before Mr. Clowes's first season opened, the fine stables built by Mr. Lyne Stephens found a new tenant in Mr. Chaplin, who therein housed eighteen fine hunters. For some reason or other a prejudice had existed against these stables, which, until Mr. Chaplin took them, were unoccupied for many years.

Owing to various circumstances, bad weather included, Mr. Clowes's opening day with the Quorn at Kirby Gate (1863) was not quite such a brilliant function

<sup>1</sup> The question of wire-fencing appears to have first cropped up in Leicestershire about 1858, though I fancy something was said about it in the time of Sir Richard Sutton, and towards the close of Lord Stamford's mastership it became something of a burning question. During more recent years wire has been taken down and replaced at the expense of the Hunt.

as usual. Atmospheric conditions were adverse, and rather poor sport was experienced, but the Leicestershire ranks were at this time recruited by Mr. Bromley Davenport, whose essays on sport, and hunting poems, have been so much appreciated. He took the house of the welter-weight Colonel Wyndham, put it into repair, and hunted for a season or two more with the Quorn, with which pack he had always appeared in the first flight. Early in the season the Quorn had a very fair run from Wartnaby Stone-pits.

They found a fox at Welby Fishponds, hounds running at a great rate towards Ashfordby, most of the field being left behind. The fox ran up wind, crossed the river Wreake, but luckily within convenient distance of a bridge, over which the few men who secured a good start passed, and managed to keep somewhere near hounds. Then the fox went over the railway, turned to the left, and eventually made his way into Melton parish, and from there went tolerably straight for Mr. Burbage's new covert, hounds running fast all the time, and when they reached the last-mentioned covert fifty minutes had elapsed from the start. The good sportsman who owned the place was first up, with Lord Wilton not very far behind him, and then either the run fox or a substitute went across the river to Stapleford, and getting into the park among the deer hounds had to give up, after a capital run of something over an hour.

We next come to rather a curious complaint as to Mr. Clowes's hounds. It was said that instead of working slowly and following the scent quietly, as they used to do, hounds ran very much faster, and nine-tenths of the runs resolved themselves into a race, consequently the bulk of the field saw little or nothing of what took place, unless by short cuts or dodging they happened to drop in when the hounds took a turn.

This, it must be remembered, was not in the olden days of hunting—though even then, at any rate in the time of Mr. Warde and Mr. Meynell, hounds were not slow—but no longer ago than 1863, so one can hardly understand the meaning of the criticism. The letter,

however, wound up with the intimation that Mr. Clowes had just gone away to be married.

The excitement in connection with the wire-fencing appears to have soon subsided, several farmers having agreed to take it down during the hunting season, while in Mr. Tailby's country they, almost to a man, readily freed the fields from that scourge, so in acknowledgment a considerable sum of money was subscribed to increase the prizes at the farmers' races. There was one farmer, however, in the Quorn country who, although he did not employ wire as a means of fencing, was a very fine hand at preserving some strong and high posts and rails and ox fences. He lived in a favourite district, and, in years gone by, was accustomed to say that he saw two men only fit to go out hunting. One was Mr. Gressley Wilson and the other Lord Alvanley, who, in their hardest riding days, were the only pair, he averred, he ever saw go straight across his farm. This certainly speaks volumes for the strength of his fences and the nerve of the two horsemen in question.

As soon as the year 1864 dawned sport was greatly interfered with by frost and fog, and it was not till the end of the month, when the hounds met at Great Dalby, that there was an appearance of anything like decent hunting weather. The hounds drew Gartree Hill blank, and then down came the fog so thickly that although they found a fox in Thorpe Trussells they might as well have run him in the middle of the night. The field nearly lost the pack, and the foremost could only ride to them by strongly putting to the test their sense of hearing. On the following Saturday, when they met at Beaumanor, Lord Stamford came out for the first time in that year.

As the season 1863-64 neared its end, Mr. Bromley Davenport sustained a bad fall early in March. The hounds were running very fast from Cream Gorse

towards Frisby, and when near the Leicester road Mr. Davenport's horse—he was then, by the way, Mr. Davenport Bromley—galloped into a “grip,” turned a complete somersault, and threw its rider very heavily upon his head. He was picked up in an insensible condition, but afterwards came round and was taken home.

The readers of a well-known sporting paper were also horrified about this time to hear of a fatal accident which was stated to have occurred while the Quorn were hunting near Willoughby, to a certain Sir B. Hichens, who was said to have been well known for many years with the Quorn hounds. With great attention to detail, it was stated that his horse, a young thoroughbred chestnut, became unmanageable when the hounds found, and eventually running away with his rider, took a five-barred gate, and then collided with a plough which lay in his track. The horse, the account went on, did not perceive it; a fearful fall resulted, and the unfortunate gentleman, after being picked up in an insensible condition, was taken to a farmhouse, never rallied, and died in a few hours. The horse was killed on the spot by one of the iron handles of the plough entering his body. Meantime everybody was asking who Sir B. Hichens was. Nobody in the Quorn country had ever heard his name, and as a matter of fact no such person existed, the whole thing being a stupid hoax.

The spring of 1864 was memorable from the fact that the first Grand National Hunt Steeplechase was run over the Melton Mowbray country, the stewards being the Duke of Beaufort, the Marquis of Hastings, Lord Coventry, Lord Grosvenor, Lord Grey de Wilton, Lord Walter Scott, the Hon. G. Fitzwilliam, Mr. George Lane Fox, Mr. Clowes, Mr. W. W. Tailby, Mr. B. J. Angell, and Mr. G. Craven; while the judge was Mr. R. Johnson. Four years previously “Fog” Rowlands, as Mr. Fothergill Rowlands, of turf celebrity, was commonly called,



tried to inaugurate a similar contest in the Market Harborough country, but met with scant support, chiefly, it is supposed, because of the objection entertained to the ridge and furrow which abounded in that district. On this occasion, however, the matter came off. A horse called Cooksboro' was first past the post, but there was an objection (entertained at Epsom) on account of Mr. Loton, the rider, not being qualified either as a farmer or a gentleman rider, and the race was eventually awarded to the Game Chicken, ridden by Captain Smith. Cooksboro' came in first by five lengths, Game Chicken was a length in advance of Sir Stephen, who in turn was four lengths in advance of Crusade; Triangle was fifth, and The Miller sixth; and these were all which passed the post out of twenty-eight starters. It cannot be said that the Grand National Hunt race has maintained its character; but this is by the way.

About the same time (April) was recorded the death of the last of the four M's—Mr. Maxse—who, together with Mr. Moore, Mr. Valentine Maher, and Sir James Musgrave, were so long familiar figures with the Quorn. Mr. Maxse hunted in the days of Assheton Smith, and they were said to be an uncommonly silent pair; and Mr. Maxse, it may be remembered, was limited to a pint of port a day by Mr. Smith, the Squire saying that if he drank more he would get too fat to ride.

The results of the season 1863-64 were that the Quorn were out eighty days, killed thirty-three brace of foxes, and had only one blank day, which was from Bunny, when the weather was something awful. There were fifty-six couples of working hounds in kennel, and perhaps their best run was one of two hours in December, from Grace Dieu, the fox being killed near Leake Pit House; while there was another very good forty-five minutes from Walton Thorns to Willoughby Gorse. One fox was killed, and the same afternoon

there was a good run from Grimston Gorse to Melton Spinney.

Nothing of much importance appears to have happened at the opening of the season 1864-65, but with December sport improved, and under Mr. Clowes the Quorn enjoyed a series of good runs in the last month of the year. Early in December they had a capital hour and twenty minutes from Scraftoft Spinneys, across by Glen Gorse, and round by Wigston, hounds killing their fox on the Harborough turnpike road; but this run was eclipsed by one which took place a few days afterwards from Bunny Woods. Hounds simply raced for six miles as far as Hicklin, and then, at a somewhat slower pace, hunted their fox on to Clawson Thorns, where he managed to get away. In this run Mr. Gilmour's horse put its foot in a rabbit-hole, and gave its rider a heavy fall, which kept that excellent sportsman out of the saddle for some little time.

Early in the new year frost set in, and what was hoped would have been one of the best seasons Leicestershire had known for some time was quite marred by the hard ground.

It was in the year 1865 that the Grand National was won by Alcibiade, belonging to Mr. B. J. Angell, consequently all Leicestershire was in a state of rejoicing. Mr. Coventry rode the horse, and it was said that he, Mr. Angell, Captain Coventry, and two others divided something like £30,000 between them over the event; the sporting Leicestershire folk were additionally glad of the victory, because the rider of Alcibiade took his first lessons in horsemanship in the neighbourhood of Melton.

In January 1866 Mr. Clowes had a somewhat novel experience. The hounds were hunting in the neighbourhood of Nether Broughton, and on reaching a wheat field belonging to a farmer named Brett, the master and his followers were somewhat astonished to find

their progress barred. A body of labourers armed with sticks were drawn up in front of the field, while the farmer briefly explained that he did not mean to have his crops destroyed. The impromptu army under Mr. Brett's command brandished their sticks, and effectually kept both the hounds and field from crossing his property. So Mr. Clowes accepted the situation, and went home.

At the beginning of the season 1865-66 the master expressed his intention of resigning, and in January 1866 the sale of the hounds in April was announced. Then people began to wonder how they could keep Mr. Clowes in office, and on being approached, he was half inclined to say that he would continue to hunt, provided the subscriptions were paid, and a reasonable sum was given to him to carry on the hounds. Early in March a meeting, however, was held at the Bell Hotel, Leicestershire, to make some arrangements for the future hunting of the country, in consequence of Mr. Clowes's announced intention of giving up the hounds. Mr. Herrick was in the chair, while Lord Wilton, Sir Frederick Fowke, Mr Little Gilmour, Mr. Heygate, Mr. Clowes, Mr. Charlton, and Mr. Ernest Chaplin were among those present. Not for the first time was the proposal made (on this occasion by Lord Wilton) that a committee should be appointed for managing the rented coverts; but perhaps the best history of Mr. Clowes's resignation comes from his own lips. Early in July the ex-master was entertained at dinner, and was presented with a testimonial, and in returning thanks for the toast of his health, he gave a succinct account of what had led up to the crisis:—

Before Lord Stamford gave up the country, the then committee had ceased to pay any attention to business; they were in debt, and not being able to obtain subscriptions to pay for the coverts, they were obliged to represent the actual condition of things to

Lord Stamford, and it was no wonder his lordship said he should retire at the termination of the season. He (Mr. Clowes) then tried hard all the winter, and became tired of making the necessary efforts; he could not obtain a committee; so he took upon himself to rent the coverts. The season being over, he inquired of Lord Stamford if he were going on again, and on receiving an affirmative reply, Mr. Clowes again undertook the coverts. The next season saw the actual retirement of Lord Stamford, the committee were again placed in their old position, and then Mr. Clowes offered to get a pack of hounds, and hunt the country in the best manner he could, if £1600 a year could be raised. The ex-master then went on to say that he had carried on the country for the last three years, but now they were in a mess again, and he proceeded to explain why he relinquished the mastership. He had thought that if he had so much in the shape of a subscription, he could manage the remainder without its proving detrimental to his private property, or without its taking more of his income than he ought to spend on any one amusement; but, on looking closely into matters, he discovered that the mastership was costing him more than he should expend on such an object, and he determined to resign. It was, however, a mistake to suppose he had not been properly supported. In the first year he received nearly £2000, and in the next he found himself a little short; but then it must be understood that there was no one to collect the subscriptions, and, independently of taking charge of the hounds, he had had all the business of the management of the country thrown upon him. He, however, had a full knowledge of the difficulties to be gone through to obtain subscriptions when he took office; but the expense had become too much for him, and the bother of the country and the coverts was too much for any one man to cope with. No blame attached to anybody, for he took the country as he found it, but discovered it was too much for him. It had been insinuated in some quarters that he had been badly used; but, with the single exception of a half-witted fellow who lived in the forest, he had always been treated well by everybody.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In January of 1803, just before Lord Stamford's period of mastership came to an end, and about the time that Mr. Clowes made his offer to hunt the country, Mr. W. U. Heygate, M.P., offered to issue some circulars with the idea of urging hunting men to contribute to the Hunt funds, so as to satisfy Mr. Clowes's remarkably modest requirements. Thereupon "An Old Fox-hunter" wrote to the *Leicester Journal* (16th January 1863) to "plead

Mr. Clowes's hounds were sold at the Quorn kennels, early in April 1866, by Messrs. Tattersall, and fifty-seven couples were put up. Lots 1-14 consisted of four couples each, and lot 15 of three couples; while there were six lots of young hounds; and the total sum realised was 1401 guineas.

the cause of the old Quorn hounds." In his most sensible letter he remarked : " It is well known that the strangers to the country, who annually fill Melton, &c., would, regardless of past traditions, gladly see the old Quorn country broken up in a manner more convenient for themselves; and it is said that this district, spoilt by the liberality of the present and past masters of the Quorn, is actually unable to raise an adequate subscription for itself. . . . There are many whose hands the circular (Mr. Heygate's) will never reach, and who are yet most interested in the maintenance, not only of hounds, but of the present mode of hunting the old Quorn country. Let me appeal to these, and to all who cling to past associations, to lose no time in announcing their wishes, and, let me also add, their contributions."



## MARQUIS OF HASTINGS

1866-1868

WHAT the country intended to do with respect to a new master does not appear to be very clear. Nobody appears to have offered himself for the post, nor do the committee seem to have made any effort to discover any one who would be willing to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Mr. Clowes, but at the sale of that gentleman's hounds it was discovered that the Marquis of Hastings, whose name was well known in connection with the turf, had bought something like twenty-eight couples of the best hounds. It was said that he bought the nucleus of his pack a good deal better than he expected, as it was reported that he had given Mr. Storey, who was present at the sale on his behalf, a commission not to go over a hundred guineas a couple. But it appears that he was not called upon to pay anything like that sum. Lord Curzon and Captain Anstruther Thomson bought a lot apiece. The late Lord (then the Hon. R. C.) Hill bought some for Shropshire, and some went to the Albrighton country. The Marquis of Hastings at any rate secured a sufficient number to start hunting with; and so eager was he to begin his duties as M.F.H. that he had Macbride and the hounds out at Grace Dieu on the Forest on the morning after the sale, and finding a fox had a capital twenty-five minutes with him, eventually rolling over the fox in the open. The new master was also a purchaser of some of Mr. Drake's hounds, while he drew as well upon the Bedale and South

and West Wilts kennels. Between the Marquis of Hastings and Mr. Tailby the arrangement was that the former should hunt the country west of the river Wreake, and that he should also include the old Donington country. For some time there had been a difficulty in connection with Walton Thorns, a covert which, since the doing away with Munday's Gorse, had never maintained its previous reputation. It would appear that Lord Archibald St. Maur, having some shooting in the vicinity of Walton Thorns, was desirous of renting that covert and some land near it. Lord Archibald declared that if he obtained the shooting he would preserve foxes; but that if he were denied he would kill every fox coming on to his land adjoining the covert. Meantime the owner of the covert declined to let the right of shooting, and so the matter stood for a long time. Who the owner or occupier of Walton Thorns was at this time I do not know, but it is on record that

At Walton Thorns there were plenty of foxes, and the farmer's wife informed the gentlemen who partook of her bread and cheese that she had been a fox-hunter for four-and-forty years, and had given luncheon to fifteen masters of the Quorn.<sup>1</sup> As for the cubs, she said they might eat everything off the farm rather than she would have them touched, and she dashed into the rides with her gown up to her armpits when the hounds were drawing to watch the "new man" (presumably Charles Pike, a good man in all respects, who remained one season only with the Marquis of Hastings), and to see that her darlings enjoyed fair play at his hands.

Hunting runs rather than brilliant bursts appear to have characterised the Marquis of Hastings' first season.

<sup>1</sup> Ranking the Marquis of Hastings as one of the fifteen, the old lady's hospitality must have extended back to Mr. Assheton Smith, if we regard Mr. Osbaldeston as two masters by virtue of his having been master twice. If he be regarded as one master only, the fifteenth would be Lord Foley, who gave up in 1807. Forty-four years back from 1867, however, would only carry us back to 1823, the year in which the Squire entered upon his second mastership of the Quorn.

In December 1866 the hounds were sometimes out five days a week, and in one week three of the days were on the Donington side.

On Monday the 24th December there was found a fox which ran to Belvoir; on Tuesday they were running "all day and part of the night" in the Donington country; on the Wednesday they had what was up to that date the run of the season. An outlying fox found in a field near Breedon Clouds ran thence to Congerston Gorse, near Gopsall, the line being over the Atherstone country. On Thursday Lord Stamford's woods near Bradgate gave the hounds a fox which was not pulled down till he had stood before them for upwards of two hours; then came an evening gallop, and there was at any rate decent sport on the Friday. On the 11th January (Friday) 1867 a hard frost threatened to stop hunting, but after waiting for some time a beginning was made, and after Gartree Hill had been drawn blank some one turned down a bag fox near Sir F. Burdett's covert, so the master caused the hounds to be stopped and taken away to Thorpe Trussells. A fox was soon found near the road, and hounds ran him at quite a fair pace towards Great Dalby, and then to the right under Burrough Hill, leaving the village on the left. A second fox which was viewed running parallel to the line of the first might have complicated matters somewhat, but the pack stuck to the line of the hunted fox. Leaving Twyford on the right the brook came in sight, and as hounds were then running at a good pace, a few only cared to turn away for the bridge; but the water claimed several victims, while those who did get across were not very well pleased at discovering that the fox had gone back, so that the brook had to be jumped again. Eventually, after running near Lowesby (Mr. Tailby leading the way), up the Newton Hills, to the left of the Coplow and Billesdon, hounds ran tolerably fast to Skeffington, nearly up to Mr. Tailby's house; the fox was killed in the kitchen garden at Loddington Hall, after a run of an hour and forty minutes.

In February 1867 the first whipper-in (Philip Toccock) had to go home in consequence of a bad fall, and was not out again for a week. On the first day on which he was able to appear, Stephen Winkworth, the second whipper-in, broke his collar-bone, and then during March



there was so much frost, accompanied by easterly winds, that hunting was a good deal interfered with.

On February 4th the Belvoir met at Hose Grange, and finding in the gorse, enjoyed a capital twenty minutes' gallop wherewith to begin the day. Near to the New Covert the Quorn, who had brought a fox from Lodge-on-the-Wolds, were in sight, but they, on seeing the Belvoir, retired within their own boundaries. The Belvoir found their next fox at the Old Hills, and getting well away drove him past Scalford; but after running for about a quarter of an hour they again met the Quorn, who had run a fox from Grimston Gorse, and by some accident the two lines crossed, both packs getting on to the same fox, and for ten minutes they ran hard in the direction of Piper Hole, killing their fox by Goadby Fishpond. Both huntsmen of course claimed the fox, but one of the Belvoir whippers-in was the first to handle him; the joint packs then broke him up, and separated for home.

On the 16th of that month the Belvoir and Mr. Tailby's were close to one another, but did not clash; on this occasion neither huntsman brought his fox to hand.

The run of the season 1866-67, however, may be said to have taken place on the 6th April, when the Quorn met at Wimeswold.

Willoughby Gorse and some of the Widmerpool coverts were blank, and it was not until the afternoon that the field found themselves at Walton Thorns (a covert above alluded to in connection with Lord Archibald St. Maur's shooting). In the Thorns, however, they found a bob-tailed fox which had already twice tried conclusions with Pike, the huntsman, and his hounds, and away this fox went in the direction of Seagrave. At a merry pace the hounds ran on nearly to Cossington Gorse; then turning to the left and running by Thrussington, Hoby, Asfordby, and then some distance further on, the fox was rolled over close to Old Hills in the Belvoir country. The distance from point to point

was called over nine miles, while hounds are said to have run about fourteen; but there is probably a mistake somewhere, seeing that the time is given as an hour and ten minutes only. From start to finish the hounds were never once cast or interfered with, and as the run lay over a stiff line, falls were numerous; but happily there was but one accident, and that happened to Captain King, who broke his collar-bone.

Towards the close of the season 1866-67, while the weather was very wet, the Quorn had a somewhat notable run. On Monday the 11th February 1867 the hounds met at Six Hills.

They first drew Cossington Gorse, where they found at once, the fox, after showing himself once or twice, going away in view of most of the field. The hounds were not far behind him; and in the direction of Thrussington and Hoby they ran nicely for about fifteen minutes, when they checked; but, hitting off the line by themselves, ran rather slower than at first almost to Schooby Scholes, where they checked again. A countryman, however, had viewed the fox into the gorse, whence the hounds soon forced him, but whether he was the hunted fox is uncertain. At any rate hounds drove along to Grimston Gorse, through it, and then over the well-known line by Wartnaby Stone-pits and Little Belvoir. On more than one occasion the chances of a run were in danger of being spoiled through fresh foxes jumping up; but Pike held his hounds to the hunted fox past Holwell Mouth and Clawson Thorns, along the hillside through the Piper Hole Gorses nearly to Strattem Point. There the fox, quite beat, lay down, and was run into after a good hunting run of about a couple of hours. It was tolerably straight, and perhaps about fourteen miles from point to point.<sup>1</sup>

In June 1867, and consequently during the mastership of the Marquis of Hastings, a horse and hound show was held at Bingley Hall, Birmingham. Some roomy temporary kennels had been put up for the hounds, and the judging-ring, about 40 by 30 feet, was boarded instead of flagged. The judges were Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Sutton had a somewhat similar run; but his fox, which was killed at Denton, took him rather more to the right.

Cornelius Tongue, who wrote as "Cecil," and John Walker, who had left Sir Watkin Wynn two years previously; and they gave first prize to three couples of the Quorn bitches—

Dainty, 5 years, by Quorn Albert—Quorn Dainty; Harriet and Heroine, 4 years, by Worcestershire Sportsman—Quorn Honesty; Needful, 3 years, by Drake's Castor—his Needful; Music, 3 years, by Quorn Marmion—Quorn Niobe; Violet, by Lord Yarborough's Freeman—his Violet.

I have found a note about this show to the effect that the Quorn three couples were "a nice level lot, without any pretensions to extraordinary symmetry." To-day they would perhaps hardly be up to Peterborough form.

This Birmingham hound-show appears to have been conducted upon altogether new lines. Some clever person took it into his head that the public would be attracted and amused if all the hounds were mixed up together into one big pack, and paraded in the ring by a huntsman and two whippers-in, mounted on horses which had taken prizes; and, strangely enough, this queer suggestion commended itself to the executive. To the huntsman of the Quorn fell the dubious honour of playing the principal part in this comedy. He by no means appreciated the distinction, for he was perfectly well aware that a show-hunter was not synonymous with a hunter warranted not to kick hounds, and knew that in the event of his mount kicking, one of his own hounds would be the probable victim, as they would actually be nearest to him. Shortly before the parade the hounds were fed to order of the authorities—the reader may guess the sequel: the arena was promptly cleared.

The Marquis of Hastings' second and last season was not productive of good sport. Pike, who had proved himself a very capable huntsman in 1866-67,

left, and was replaced by Thomas Wilson ; while both whippers-in were changed. In the autumn of 1867 the Marquis of Hastings removed the kennels to Donington for reasons which no doubt seemed good to him, but which were not quite understood by the Quorn hunting-men.

In December 1867, after some bad weather, the hounds met at Barkby, and found in the Holt after being for a long time in covert. The fox went away at the lower side, and after the hounds had been running for about five minutes, Lord Charles Ker broke his leg through his horse falling in a lane ; while only a little further on the second whipper-in was considerably injured by his horse falling with him, neither accident having occurred at a fence. Barkby Holt, indeed, established a character for being unlucky, as during the season two more good sportsmen broke their legs near this covert.

About Christmas time it became known that the Marquis of Hastings would give up the country at the end of the season. So many lives of the marquis have been written at different times, and he has been the subject of so much blame and obloquy, that one naturally is unwilling to add to the disparaging remarks already made ; but in attempting an outline history of the famous Quorn Hunt it is impossible to avoid saying that as a master he was not a success. He had no real love for hunting, and he was busied with racing matters. Punctuality, alas ! he never thought of, and it was no uncommon occurrence for him to keep the field waiting an unconscionable time before he arrived, and then he would often leave the hounds early to go off to some race-meeting.

On one occasion Mr. Sothern, the actor, who when playing at Birmingham never missed an opportunity of hunting with any pack within reach, once took a horse

down from London to have a day with the Marquis of Hastings. The advertised time (it was late in March) was twelve o'clock, but the master did not reach the covert-side until after one o'clock ; and then he and some friends went inside Barkby Hall, where they remained until half-past. This delay of course cut the day very short, and after a fox had been found at Barkby Holt, and had run by South Croxton to Baggrave, Mr. Sothern had to leave the hounds in order to catch the train at Leicester, to reach London in time to appear the same evening at the Haymarket. He was greatly annoyed at obtaining so little fun for his money ; but these long waits were unfortunately too common.

On the Marquis of Hastings giving up the country, the hounds and horses were sold at the kennels on the 2nd May 1868. Masters of hounds were well represented, Lord Coventry, Lord Rendlesham, Lord Henry Bentinck, Lord Macclesfield, Colonel Anstruther Thomson, Mr. Hugo Meynell Ingram, Mr. Harvey Bayly, Mr. Drake, Colonel Jardine (from Forfarshire), Messrs. Vernon, Allsopp, Mr. Francklin (who laid the foundation of his new pack), the Hon. R. Nevill, and Mr. Henley Greaves being among those present, and some of them bought either hounds or horses. Among the assembly of huntsmen was old Tom Day, who was still living at Quorn, and who informed his friends that this was the seventh sale of the Quorn hounds at which he had been present ; so often had they been dispersed. In the paddock adjoining the kennels a rostrum was erected for Mr. Pain of Tattersall's, who conducted the sale. The Marquis and Marchioness of Hastings were present, and the hounds, which were sold in thirty lots, realised 1057 guineas, twenty-nine hunters bringing 3098 guineas.

## MR. JOHN CHAWORTH MUSTERS

1868-1870

AT the time of the Marquis of Hastings giving up the Quorn hounds, which was by no means an unexpected event, Mr. J. C. Musters (grandson of the famous Jack Musters) was hunting the South Notts country, of which two members of his family had already been masters. He in fact resuscitated the old South Notts country, and laid the foundation of his pack with four couples of Mr. Drake's hounds, for which he gave 220 guineas. He obtained some other drafts from other good kennels, and appointed Ben Boothroyd as kennel huntsman. Then in 1868 he handed over the South Notts country to Mr. Francklin, and when the Quorn were in rather a difficulty for a new master, he stepped forward and became the Marquis of Hastings' successor, bringing with him a very excellent and clever pack of hounds; and, what is more, he took the expensive Leicestershire country without a subscription.

Mr. Musters was born in 1838, and on leaving Eton went to Christ Church, Oxford, where in 1857 he began to keep a pack of beagles and hunted with the Bicester. He left Oxford early and then took to hunting his own country, his first hounds being bought of Mr. Ambrose Philips. He killed his first fox on November 30, 1861, after a good forty minutes' run, near his own residence, Annesley Park.

Mr. Musters had scarcely settled down in his new position ere he lost his first whipper-in through a some-

what curious accident. He and Frank Gillard, who came with him from South Notts, divided the hunting between them at Quorn, and on one day Gillard took the young hounds into Garendon Park for the purpose of making them steady from deer. When returning over the park on the way home, Roger Onions, the first whipper-in, saw a lame deer, towards which the hounds were trotted. When the pack approached it, Onions started at a canter in order to turn the deer in front of the hounds. Unluckily, however, his horse and the deer came into collision, and he thereupon fell to the ground. He was rescued as soon as possible, but died within ten hours of the accident, without ever again becoming conscious, and what made matters all the worse was that he left a young widow and three children totally unprovided for. A subscription was at once set on foot for the benefit of his family, and Mr. Musters headed the list with a ten-pound donation. At the inquest Gillard stated that, seeing the deer and the horse were likely to collide, he called to Onions to stop, but the deceased did not appear to hear him. After the fall the deer got up and ran away, but the whipper-in was left on the ground with his left leg under the horse for a few seconds. On the horse getting up, the unfortunate man's foot remaining in the stirrup, he was dragged, but only for a few yards. On being liberated he was raised up, but was insensible, and he died about six o'clock in the evening. A verdict of accidental death was returned. John Goddard, jun., was second whipper-in at the time.

It cannot be said that Mr. Musters's first season opened very joyously, for in November his predecessor, the Marquis of Hastings, died, and about the same time Lord Somerville was killed while hunting with Mr. Tailby.

Contrary to general custom, politics about this time found their way into the hunting-field. Mr. Clowes,

who had been master before Lord Hastings, courted the suffrages of the voters of North Leicestershire as their member, whereupon his opponent, Mr. C. H. Frewen, wrote a letter to the Duke of Rutland to the effect that it was always best to be straightforward in all matters, and he added :—

I do not think that Mr. Clowes's prospects of success in North Leicestershire are very encouraging, but there is a decided feeling with many that if he should be dragged in to represent the fox-hunting interest, why, then the sooner fox-hunting is put an end to the better; and if it should so happen that he gets in, some of us intend to do our best to clear the country of foxes, *which can very easily be done*. When poor men have been turned out of their land because they dared to vote for me in 1865, we shall be quite justified in taking this course. A gentleman of large landed property in the county said to me only on Saturday "that it was monstrous bringing forward a man who had no property in the county, and who had only been here a few years as a fox-hunter, and who was shortly going to leave the county."

I have written in the same tone to Mr. Tailby and Colonel Lowther, in order that they may know what our intentions are; and if such a state of things should be brought about, the fox-hunters will then have nothing to complain of, as they will have been informed beforehand what our intentions were.

(Signed) C. H. FREWEN.

If there was any *great* difference in our political opinions, or if Mr. Clowes was an owner of property in the county, things would be very different. The Conservatives in this county have lost two seats through their own foolish conduct—the Borough of Leicester and South Leicestershire—both of which they had previous to the election in 1865, and if they lose any more seats they will only have to thank themselves for it.

To this the duke returned an answer that he failed to see what possible bearing the return of either Mr. Frewen or Mr. Clowes would have on the subject of hunting, while he further challenged Mr. Frewen's statement that poor men had been turned out of their homes









*Childs Do. Kirby Toll Gate. St. F. Bardsley. Home. Milton Mowbray*

THE MEETING.—KIRBY GATE. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



*Gable. Pilsbury Coplow. Honnibon. Boston Bay Course. Snap Tail Spout. Heron. Ingalls Square. Houghton. Barkby Hill. Quads Hall*

BRACING COVER.—BILLESDON COPLOW. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



because on a previous occasion they had voted for him (Mr. Frewen). The duke added that he should very much like to have the name and address of any person who had been so treated.

Frank Gillard, who hunted for him (Mr. Musters) in Leicestershire, and afterwards became the famous huntsman of the Belvoir, had a long career with hounds.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Musters's first season chanced to be a very good scenting one, consequently a great deal of excellent sport was enjoyed.

Mr. Storey of Lockington, when the subject of the Quorn sport was raised, used chaffingly to say that if Mr. Musters could not show sport he did not know who could, seeing that he had three huntsmen on his establishment; he himself was one, Frank Gillard was another, and John Machin,<sup>2</sup> who had formerly hunted the Rufford,

<sup>1</sup> In 1857 he was huntsman and whipper-in to Captain Willett's harriers, the captain hunting a country round Monkleigh, in North Devon; but after two years' experience of hare-hunting (that is to say, in 1859) he became second whip to the Hon. Mark Rolle, and then came to the Belvoir as second whipper-in. In 1863 he became first whipper-in, James Cooper being the huntsman, and in 1867 Gillard left Rutlandshire to go to Mr. Musters, who was then hunting the South Notts country, succeeding Ben Boothroyd as first whipper-in and kennel huntsman. When Mr. Musters took the Quorn in 1868, Gillard went with him, and hunted the bitch pack two days a week on the Melton side, the master taking the forest side on the other two days with the dog hounds. Gillard then hunted for a short time under Mr. Coupland, but almost before he had settled down the Belvoir were in want of a huntsman, so the Duke of Rutland offered him the place, as he had made his mark when whipping-in to that pack. There was necessarily some difficulty about terminating his engagement with Mr. Coupland, but that gentleman, on being appealed to by the duke, at once released Gillard, who hunted the pack from that time down to 1866, when Sir Gilbert Greenall became master, and engaged Ben Capell, from the Blankney, as huntsman.

<sup>2</sup> John Machin, in his best days a first-class horseman, went in 1861 to the Rufford as first whipper-in, and he subsequently became huntsman; but leaving there in 1868 he was first whipper-in to the Quorn under Mr. Musters, and there he stayed two seasons, his successor being Thomas Wiggins. His next place was as huntsman to the Ticklam foxhounds up to 1872, from which date he discharged the same duty in connection with the Pytchley for three years. Machin then set up as a horse-breaker, and for a time was very successful, for he had a good stock of patience and fine hands. The year 1878 saw him again with hounds—as huntsman to the

was first whipper-in, while John Goddard, after hunting the Quorn and Mr. Tailby's hounds, engaged himself to Mr. Musters as stud-groom; so there was certainly plenty of science and talent in the kennel.<sup>1</sup>

At that time there was no better hunting man in Leicestershire than Lord Wilton, and towards the end of Mr. Musters's first season, that is to say, in March 1869, Lord Wilton, while hunting with the Belvoir, rode at a small fence, and his horse overjumping himself came down, and rising at once ran down a steep bank. His rider, who had not lost his seat, though he was minus a stirrup, did his best to steady his hunter, but he overbalanced himself and came down very heavily upon the ground, breaking his left arm, and also a rib. This unfortunate *contretemps* to one of the best horsemen in Leicestershire naturally cast something of a gloom over Melton Mowbray and its neighbourhood.

Taking the season through, it was felt that in the hands of Mr. Musters much had been accomplished to

Lamerton hounds. On a change of mastership taking place Machin left, and once more devoted himself to horse-breaking until 1885, when he was made huntsman to the Anglesey harriers; but sustaining a bad fall in his third season, he injured his spine; his brain became affected, and he died in an asylum after a year's confinement therein.

<sup>1</sup> John Goddard began his hunting career as second whipper-in to the Heythrop under Jem Hills when Lord Redesdale was the ruling spirit of the Hunt, which has for so many years been in the able hands of Mr. Albert Brassey. In 1851 he became landlord of the White Hart, Chipping Norton, but after a five years' tenure he left that house, and went to hunt the Shropshire for one season under Mr. Morris, and then he was engaged by Mr. Tailby, whom he served for seven seasons. Leaving that gentleman in 1863, he hunted the Quorn for three years under Mr. Clowes, and after one season with the Hon. W. H. J. North (afterwards Lord North), of the Bicester, he gave up hunting in consequence of the hold rheumatism had of him. He then, as above mentioned, became stud-groom to Mr. Musters, and no man could have been better fitted for the post, as he was a brilliant horseman, a capital stableman, and was possessed of a good deal of veterinary knowledge. When Mr. Musters gave up his hounds, John Goddard, who had three sons who served with hounds, went into retirement, living at Lowdham, near Nottingham, where he died rather suddenly on the 14th August 1880.

efface the memory of the past two seasons. Mr. Musters was nothing if not thorough, and in place of the very casual system which had been in vogue in the late marquis's time, punctuality, order, and strict attention to detail reigned supreme; while those who had been accustomed to ride rough-shod over the hounds, and do all manner of things that they ought not to do, were very much kept in order by Mr. Musters, who never hesitated when necessary to strongly enforce his claims.

Mr. Ernest Chaplin, of Brooksby Hall, assisted by a practical farmer, Mr. Thomas Wright, managed the coverts, so it was no wonder that matters in connection with the Quorn Hunt showed a great improvement. There were, of course, some bad days: but as a kind of foretaste of what was to come, the Quorn had a really brilliant run during cub-hunting from Crosley Spinneys, a place not far from Leicester. Hounds ran hard by the town, and killed near Glenfield. The first twenty minutes was at racing pace, and then came rather steady hunting to the finish of the run. Since then many good runs were brought off, and the Melton brigade made no complaint, while the Market Harborough division took every opportunity of joining Mr. Musters, to participate in the many good things which came off. The November of 1868 brought with it a lack of scent, but in December things improved, and several good runs came off.

Although Mr. Musters rode between seventeen and eighteen stone, his weight never stopped him, for he rode well up to his hounds, while Lord Wilton (then nearly seventy years of age) went most brilliantly all the season through up to the time of his accident. Mr. Burbidge, too, another veteran, was always prominent in every good run, and Lord Calthorpe, Lord Royston, Sir Frederick Johnstone, and Mr. Chaplin, one and all

served to keep up the reputation of Leicestershire as the home of hard riders.

Melton itself was extremely full of visitors, and the principal studs were very strong; but, as a chronicler of the time wrote—

A swell of the first water at Melton is not supposed to know how many horses he possesses. There were, however, about twenty-five to the credit of Lord Wilton, Mr. Little Gilmour owned half a score, Mr. Crawford sixteen, Messrs. Behrens thirty-five, Messrs. Coupland twenty-five, Major Paynter ten, Mr. Westley Richards thirty, Sir Frederick Johnstone twenty, Lord Calthorpe sixteen, and Lord Royston thirteen, besides many others which fall just short of double figures.

But in spite of all this preparation for the chase there was a scarcity of foxes in some places.

A pleasant incident of the opening day of Mr. Musters's second season at Kirby Gate was the presentation to him of a whip, on the part of the earth-stoppers of his country, in acknowledgment of his liberal treatment of them. Sport was rather poor, but the goodwill of the earth-stoppers was worth a great deal. The reason given for the scarcity of foxes was the increase of game-preserving in the country, and on Charnwood Forest especially. The fox-preserving question was evidently a serious one, for in December 1869 a meeting of the members of the Quorn Hunt was held at the County Club at Leicester, Mr. Clowes (then M.P.) in the chair. After passing a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Musters for the manner in which he hunted the country, it was determined that every effort should be made to induce the owners and occupiers of land and coverts to preserve foxes, and, while they were about it, to take down the wire which in some parts of the country was such an annoyance.

Among the May meetings which took place in 1869



was one of the London Farmers' Club, when a paper was read on the use and abuse of fox-hunting, by the Rev. E. Smithies, of Hathern Rectory.

He occupied, he said, about three hundred acres of land, a large portion of which ran by one of the best coverts of the Quorn Hunt. Hounds often met at this place, found a fox three times out of four, and invariably crossed his land. He frequently, therefore, had the pleasure of seeing three hundred or six hundred persons ride across the ploughed fields, and no matter whether the crops were wheat, clover, or peas, away they went, all up wind, and he confessed that he frequently stood by with very mixed feelings on the national pastime. The country gentleman who had a stake in the country went over the grass; he was generally a good sportsman, and did comparatively little injury; but the rich brewer from Melton, the cotton lord from Manchester, the cloth lord from Leeds, and the iron lord from Wolverhampton, these were the men who did not care what injury they did. He said he knew opinions were divided as to whether crops suffered from being ridden over, but he was inclined to think that those who were of opinion that no harm was done farmed light land, and those who came to the opposite conclusion farmed heavy clay land. He said that he was able to show in two or three of his fields of wheat at least a thousand prints of horses' hoofs, and he would almost go so far as to say he would offer any gentleman who thought no injury was done thereby a sovereign for every blade he could find in the footprints. If, however, it was really a good thing to have one's crops ridden over he would rather ride over his own, so that he could do it regularly.

There is nothing new under the sun; for the arguments which are advanced against hunting to-day were used upwards of a hundred years ago.

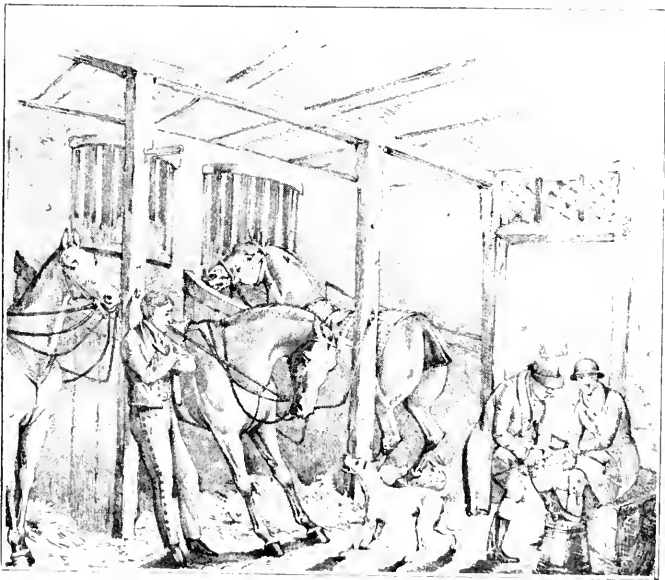
The mastership, however, which began amidst such pleasant promises was soon destined to come to an end. Towards the close of his second season Mr. Musters's health showed signs of giving way, while at the same time the strain upon his purse was greater than he could afford. Like the good sportsman he was, he could never bring himself to hunt the Quorn country in parsimonious

fashion, and so when he found that his health and his purse were alike unequal to the demands made upon them respectively, he had no alternative but to announce his determination to resign, intelligence, it is needless to say, which was received with extreme regret, and the country at once hoped that he would reconsider his decision and accept a subscription. This, however, he did not see his way to do, at least not to the full extent to which his followers wished, but he made a proposal to which reference will be made in the next chapter.

During the season 1869-70 the Quorn hunted 105 days, and managed to kill 43 brace of foxes and run 18½ brace to ground, the kennels' strength being 37½ couples of working hounds. The sport on the opening day was not of much account, and it was not until the end of November that a really good day fell to their lot. On the 22nd of that month hounds had a good run in the morning from Ashby Pasture, and a second fox from Thorpe Trussels, after running a ring nearly to Gaddesby, turned to the left and ran in a straight line until hounds were whipped off in the dark. They had previously enjoyed a very good day in Donington Park, finding in the home coverts, and killing their fox, after a very fast thirty-five minutes, in the open near Kegworth, while other good runs came with tolerable frequency afterwards.

Mr. Musters was a most popular master. A staunch follower of the Quorn has left it on record that his covert-side greeting was quite sufficient to put a man in good humour for the rest of the day, even if no sport resulted. Springing, as he did, from a family of sportsmen, it is but natural that he should have imbibed the best traditions, and approached as nearly as any human being could to an ideal master of foxhounds. Nor must it be left unsaid that Mrs. Musters in no small degree

helped to add to the success of her husband's all too short reign. Kindly and genial to every one, social life flourished under her patronage, and it was with genuine regret that the Quorn men bade adieu to Mr. and Mrs. Musters. Mrs. Musters, it will be remembered, was the compiler of two interesting little volumes of items in prose and verse connected with hunting.





## CHAPTER XI

MR. J. COUPLAND (1870-1884)



## CHAPTER XI

### MR. J. COUPLAND

1870-1884

WHEN Mr. Musters found himself unable any longer to carry on the Quorn Hunt, he made overtures to Mr. Coupland that the latter should join him as a kind of partner, and see to the hunting of the hounds, Mr. Musters, at the same time, agreeing to lend his pack to the country. This arrangement was virtually carried out during the season of 1870-71, but Mr. Coupland was during that time the acknowledged master.

Mr. Coupland came of a Cheshire family, and was born in 1834. For about eight years in early life he was in India, and while there he established a pack of hounds at Bombay. On returning to England he hunted from Liverpool with the Cheshire hounds, occasionally going out with Sir Watkin Wynn's, and this strengthened the love for hunting which was always in him. John Walker, then Sir Watkin's huntsman, was a favourite companion of Mr. Coupland's, and from the professional the future master of the Quorn learned many precepts of the chase.

After having used Mr. Musters's hounds for a year, Mr. Coupland bought the Craven pack from Mr. George Willes, who had just given up the Berkshire country, and concerning the first appearance of these hounds in Leicestershire there are two versions. Some aver they

were quite upset by the rush of mounted men when the fox was found ; others deny the story. They were well-bred and excellent workers, but had been accustomed to hunt in a rather cold-scenting plough country, where over-riding was not practised. When they came to Leicestershire it took them some time, according to the best accounts, to become accustomed to the new surroundings. However, be that as it may, the purchase is a notable one, since the hounds which Mr. Coupland then bought are really the foundation of those in the Quorn kennels at the present day, as never since that time has the Quorn pack been dispersed.

Mr. Coupland, besides being a fine horseman, was one of the early members of the Coaching Club, and at one time his well-appointed drag was familiar to all the *habitués* of Hyde Park. He was also known in connection with steeplechasing : he himself had been seen in the saddle at Hoylake, and among other horses he owned Staunton, Bannockburn (who beat Brick at Birmingham), Round Text, and some others. About the year 1867 Mr. Coupland married Mrs. Webster, daughter of Sir Henry Calder, and grand-daughter of the first Earl of Limerick, and though Mrs. Coupland did not ride to hounds very much, she hunted a good deal on wheels.

As already mentioned, Frank Gillard began as huntsman, but Mr. Coupland released him in consequence of the representations of the Duke of Rutland, and in his place arrived James Macbride, who came from Lord Fitzhardinge.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James Macbride, who died in 1886, at the age of fifty-five, whipped in to the Quorn from 1863 to 1866, when Mr. Clowes was master ; John Goddard was huntsman, and Tom Firr second whip. He was next huntsman to the Shropshire, then under Mr. Hill, in 1866, and after three years there he went to the Berkeley, on the retirement of Harry Ayris ; and then, after one season with Lord Fitzhardinge, came to the Quorn for two seasons in succession to Frank Gillard. Leaving the Quorn, he went to the Meath,



Mr. Musters's horses were brought to the hammer, being sold by Messrs. Tattersall in May 1870; and thirty-one horses fetched 3300 guineas, and four hacks 187 guineas. The highest price realised was 300 guineas.

Though in many ways the Quorn led the fashion in hunting, no puppy show was held in connection with the pack until the summer of 1870, when, under the auspices of Mr. Coupland, the then growing custom was followed, and the master presented prizes to the farmers who walked the best puppies, and it led to very good results. The proposal, however, originally came from Mr. Musters. Curiously enough (this is stated on the authority of the *Leicester Journal*, Friday, August 12, 1870), from the days of Osbaldeston to the date just mentioned, the farmers of Leicestershire had never expressed any strong desire to promote the sport so many liked by walking puppies, but the hope was expressed that they would then be induced to do so. The judges on the occasion of the first puppy show were John Walker, Frank Goodall, and Tom Firr (the present huntsman). Fifteen couples of hounds were put forward, and Mr. Peats, of Edwalton, took a cup with Flurrier, and Mr. Farthing another with Transit, and these puppy shows were held in succeeding years; while in 1873 Mr. Coupland gave the winners the option of taking either a cup or a £10 note, and the master notified that any one who wished to walk a puppy could have one by making application to the huntsman at the Quorn kennels, but it scarcely appears that he was overwhelmed with offers.

and hunted that pack for four seasons. He next returned to the Shropshire country, the then master of which was Mr. Hulton Harrop, where he remained till that gentleman gave up the country. He was then the recipient of a testimonial, as well as of a gold watch and a chain, given by the master and his wife. Thence he moved into Cheshire, and took service with Mr. Corbet as first whip and kennel huntsman; with him he remained till the time of his death. He was a light weight, and a capital horseman.

Leaving the flags for the field, a chronicler of former years wrote :—

To swim the Wreake, where it is no more than twenty or thirty feet wide, at the end of a fine run, was sufficient to give Lords Brudenell and Gardner a place in the hunting history of Leicestershire, which will never be forgotten. In fact, crossing a river is so seldom attempted that, with the exception of the instance just mentioned, and the occasion when Lord Grey de Wilton and Captain Williams swam the Wreake near Asfordby, in the days of John Treadwell, who contented himself with keeping to dry land, and seeing how they did it, I cannot call to mind an instance of crossing deep water. However, some days since, when the Quorn met at Lockington, the hounds went away with their fox from Bottoms Gorse, and ran across the meadows to the Soar, which, always very wide, was swollen with recent rains into such a state of flood that many ideas will present themselves before that of plunging into it. The hounds, however, pressed their fox closely, and with no chance of turning he was obliged to take to the water, followed by the pack, who, to the astonishment of all, were quickly followed by the young Lord Panmure, who plunged boldly in, with a strong stream and a good long straight swim before him. Few thought that he would survive it, but he did, and landed in safety on the other side, after which, as the remainder of the field had to work two miles round to a bridge, he had the hounds all to himself, having fully deserved the honour, by the almost unexampled pluck he displayed.

Another paper, however, disputes the identity of the swimmer, and says that it was the Hon. William E. C. Stanhope, son of the Earl of Harrington, who crossed the river. Anyhow, history repeats itself, for in Captain Pennell-Elmhirst's "Cream of Leicestershire" there is an account of how, in 1871, the Quorn hounds met at Cossington, and after an hour's run came down to the banks of the Wreake, near Thrussington Mill. A great deal of rain had fallen, and the river was as yellow as the Tiber is supposed to be. Captain Elmhirst says that a rider in black plunged into the river, off a perpen-

dicular bank, and gratefully shook himself on the other side; but the author of the "Cream of Leicestershire" does not say who the "gentleman in black" was. It may be stated here, however, that this adventurous horseman was none other than the gallant captain himself. He, like Lord Panmure or Mr. Stanhope, whichever it was, had the hounds all to himself, while the field went to seek for a bridge. The captain swam the river by the mill, and terribly frightened the miller, who, when asked by some one else, "What did you think of the feat, my good miller?" replied, "Why, I just stood stock still and never said a word, thinking he would be drowned." In the Shropshire country the Severn has been swum by more than one person, one of the adventurous spirits being Sir Richard Green Price, who, under the name of "Borderer," is well known to many hunting men outside his own country—Shropshire.

At the end of Mr. Coupland's first season he began the practice, which he subsequently continued, of selling his horses at the end of each season. His first sale took place in May 1871, and the horses were voted an exceedingly workmanlike lot. Indeed, Mr. Coupland said that half of the stud was too good for the forest work. Some of the horses went cheaply enough, but the highest price was 300 guineas, thirty-five hunters and four hacks being sold for a total of 4300 guineas.

Just before the sale took place the Quorn had a very good run with a fox, which led them into the Belvoir country, and when the Duke of Rutland next greeted the Quorn contingent at Denton, his remark on the previous day's sport was, "So I hear you rode over all my best country yesterday morning, went back to Melton to luncheon, and rode over the hounds all the afternoon." The chronicler stated that the duke was not far wrong.

The Prince of Wales had, a year or two before,

enjoyed a capital run with the Belvoir from Hose Gorse, but in the March of 1871 he came to Melton to stay with Sir Frederick Johnstone, and have a few days' sport with the Quorn. It was his Royal Highness's desire to have a quiet day, and to dispense with the crowd of an advertised meet, at which it would be known he would be present, so Mr. Coupland arranged a bye-day from Ragdale, on Thursday, March 16, the fixture being kept so close a secret, that very few only were aware of what was going on. The day, however, was not by any means suitable for hunting, as plenty of snow was about, and it was not till somewhere near three o'clock that hunting really began. A fox was found at Thrussington Wolds, but was soon lost, when the hounds were taken to Cossington Gorse, some three miles distant, and from there a merry little run took place, the details of which are told in the "Cream of Leicestershire" at page 21. On Friday, March 17, Baggrave Hall was the fixture, when Colonel Burnaby gave a breakfast, the magnificence of which has perhaps never been exceeded. At the entrance to the park was a triumphal arch, on which were inscribed the names of every master who had hunted the Quorn country for the previous hundred years. The hounds were in front of the house; the Prince of Wales drove up punctually at twelve o'clock, and after he had spent something like ten minutes or a quarter of an hour at Baggrave Hall, he came forth to sow the first seeds of a new covert, which Colonel Burnaby had resolved to present to the Hunt in commemoration of the occasion. The initials "A. E." were cut in the turf, and the Prince laid what was virtually the foundation-stone of what is known as the "Prince of Wales's Covert." Colonel Burnaby had a fox in waiting in one of his own coverts, and a very good run ensued.

When hunting was over Mr. Coupland went to

London for the season, and in the month of August found himself before Mr. Dayman, at the Hammersmith Police Court, on a charge of cruelty to a horse, the prosecution being, it is said, instituted by his next-door neighbour, Mr. Milbank, M.P. It appears that Mr. Coupland had bought a cob from Mr. Sheward, the dealer, of Green Street (who did such an enormous business with the late Mr. John Gerard Leigh, master of the Hertfordshire), as a match for another, the pair being for the use of Mrs. Coupland. They were taken into the Park, and the new purchase was found to be so inveterate a jibber that Mrs. Coupland was obliged to go home in a cab. The cob was at length induced to proceed, but instead of being taken to Sheward's yard in Green Street, the vehicle was driven to Mr. Coupland's house in Cromwell Gardens; and when the time came to drive from there the animal refused to budge an inch. Thereupon Mr. Coupland brought a hunting-whip to bear upon the recusant cob, and of the use of it Mr. Milbank complained. The evidence of Sheward's men, however, was in contradiction to that of Mr. Milbank. The R.S.P.C.A. had also a hand in the affair, and Mr. Dayman's remarks are not undeserving of notice even at this day. In dismissing the summons he said that lately the Society seemed to have lost sight of, and misconceived, the principles of the Act under which they were enrolled, and had on several occasions sought to strain it, and he feared that in consequence the Act was getting into disrepute.

With the arrival of cub-hunting time 1871-72 Mr. Coupland returned to Leicestershire, and in September the fatal accident occurred which cast a gloom over the commencement of the hunting season at Melton Mowbray. Master Charles Claud Henry Webster, the eldest son of the late Mr. Fox Webster and Mrs. Coupland, and who was therefore stepson to Mr. John

Coupland, was out cub-hunting when the hounds went to Gartree Hill, and while at the covert-side the pony Master Webster was riding, on hearing the hounds, became somewhat intractable. He reared up and fell back upon the youthful sportsman, who received such severe injuries that he died on the following morning, at the age of ten years, while just afterwards a very well-known horseman, Joseph Hobson, landlord of the Railway Inn, Loughborough, was also killed while cub-hunting with the Quorn. He endeavoured to jump a gate; his mare caught the top bar with her knees, and falling, rolled right over her rider, who was put into a dogcart in an insensible condition, and died on the way to the hospital.

It was just about this period that there commenced that long dispute in connection with the Quorn country and Mr. Tailby's. As the subject is mentioned elsewhere, it is not here necessary to go into the pros and cons of the incident, which gave rise to a long correspondence and not a little trouble.

A contemporary writer stated that amongst the notices of applications to Parliament for the next session there figured one from "the already twice accused Midland Railway Company," which had thrust itself rudely over the land stretching from Leicester to Melton and Harborough. "To look at the list of names mentioned," says the above-mentioned writer, "one would gather that the whole of the south-east of Leicestershire is shortly to be transformed into a kind of Clapham Junction," and he stated that the line might possibly involve the destruction of several famous and valuable coverts. The company stated in their application that they would vary or extinguish all existing rights and privileges which would interfere with their projects, but like many other matters, the threat was scarcely carried out, and the institution of railways has

not been such a bugbear to hunting as was once thought it would be.

In the December of 1871 the untimely death of Lord Chesterfield was announced, and caused much regret in Leicestershire. Some years previously he spent much of his time at Melton, and was known as a bold and hard rider. In those "larkings" which often took place after hunting back to Melton he was frequently a leader, and he amused himself when hounds were not running very fast by jumping some of the most awkward stiles to be found in the Midlands. As years went on, however, he, like Mr. Richard Sutton, rather forsook hunting and took to shooting, while later still he interested himself before everything else in the working of his coal-mines. On one occasion, when he and some companions larked home, he jumped a very formidable stile for a bet, and having won the wager he jumped the obstacle each way again, and dared any of his friends to follow him. On another occasion, after a nearly blank day, some of the Meltonian division started to lark home. From Thrussington they went, as straight as they could make their way, over some of the stiffest parts in the Quorn country, taking a line nearly parallel with the river up towards Asfordby, then, going between the village of Thrussington and the bridge, the little party rode all together at the brook, close to where it joins the larger stream—a decidedly big jump. Three got in, but the remainder of the band landed safely on the other side, and all of them had to follow the lead of Lord Chesterfield, who took them over the big Hoby enclosures with a clear lead, and reached Asfordby nearly two fields before anybody else.

Several instances of two packs clashing are on record, and in February 1872 Mr. Musters, who had gone back to his own country in Notts, clashed with the Quorn. When the latter were within two fields of Cotgrave Gorse,

Mr. Musters and his fine pack of hounds, together with what the chronicler calls "his motley crew," appeared on the scene. Mr. Musters was the quicker to the holloa, and the two packs of hounds ran the same line. Macbride of the Quorn, then in his second and last season, was only five yards behind the Squire, and the whole forty couples went along as hard as they could go. Some little fun was poked at Mr. Musters's followers, who are described as wearing caps and brown breeches, but the hounds kept well out of the way of the crowd, and eventually ran their fox to ground close to Colston Basset.

Just about the same time came the announcement of the death of Will Derry, a well-known and highly respected hunt servant.<sup>1</sup>

On the beginning of the season 1872-73, a London daily paper contained an article headed, "The Quorn at Kirby Gate." Therein the writer made mention of the "specially succulent pork pies" of Melton Mowbray, and he proceeded to state that the trade in them was in a great measure provoked by the presence of hunting men, who find that "particular edible, when cut into slices, to be about the most convenient, not to say filling, luncheon which they can carry about with them!"

The opening of the year 1873 saw a sad accident occur to Lady Ida Hope, of Park House, Melton Mowbray, who broke her arm while hunting with the Quorn hounds. They met at Brooksby Hall, and in the course

<sup>1</sup> He was second whipper-in to Mr. Musters in Northamptonshire, the first being Tom Smith, afterwards huntsman to the Brocklesby, and it is supposed that the portraits of these two appeared in Alken's sketch of "The Squire Hunted by his Hounds," as given in Mr. Vyner's *Notitia Venatica*. From the Pytchley Derry went on to the Quorn, of which pack he was first whip under George Mountford in Mr. Rowland Errington's time. Then, when Lord Chesterfield became master of the Pytchley, Derry went to that country as huntsman, and during that brief but brilliant dynasty he was magnificently horsed, while master and man rode as hard against each other as did "Ginger" Stubbs and Tom Crommelin. When, however, "Gentleman" Smith took the Pytchley, Derry declined to stop with him.



of a slow hunting run Lady Ida Hope's horse fell at a fence. On the same day Lord Grey de Wilton's horse was caught in a sheep net, and falling heavily rolled two or three times over his rider, hurting him so much that at one time it was supposed the injury would prove fatal. However, the hurt turned out, fortunately, to be not so bad as was at first imagined; but the muscles of one shoulder were very much lacerated, and he was kept out of the saddle for some time.

The season 1872-73 opened as usual at Kirby Gate, but as a matter of fact there was no Kirby Gate, for the day for abolishing the time-honoured toll-bar came on the date on which the Quorn were to meet there. On November 1 the Turnpike Trust, with which it had its being, breathed its last, and from that time to the present Kirby Gate has really had no local habitation, though of course its name survives.

In connection with the now popular amusement of hunting on wheels, some of the inhabitants of Leicester set forth early in January 1873 to see what sport they could from a wagonette, and drove to Charnwood Forest, prepared to take part in a sort of picnic, judging from the hampers and boxes with which all the spare room was occupied. The driver was one who knew every inch of the country, and had promised to drive from point to point so that his passengers should see almost as much of the run as those who were on horseback. In order to be as good as his word, he at one point left the hard high-road for a green lane, and had the vehicle been in good condition all might have gone well. The party, however, was a heavy one, while the road was not too good; and so, before they had gone very far the vehicle parted in the middle, the horse and the fore wheels trotting on, while the hind wheels and the party remained behind, the passengers, it need hardly be said, being pitched into the mud. The horse, like

that ridden by the famous John Gilpin, when freed from his encumbrance careered merrily along, with the two wheels dangling at his heels, and rushed in among a batch of the field, causing them to scatter in all directions. The next contingent were up wind, and did not hear the shouts of those who had been first attacked, but, as a correspondent said, "each wheel did its duty," and scars innumerable on the hocks of the horses were visible for some time after.

The February of 1873 saw quite a throng of notabilities at the Harborough Hotel, Melton Mowbray. There is a story to the effect that one staunch member of the Quorn Hunt, hearing that Prince Lichtenstein, Prince Grisky, Prince Rohan, and Count Erdody were amongst those present, declared that going out with the Quorn reminded him of hunting from Rome. On Monday, February 9, their Highnesses went to meet the Quorn hounds at Widmerpool Inn. They enjoyed a very good day's sport, and it was expected that the Prince of Wales would have come down to the Harborough Hotel at the same time, but for some reason or other his visit was postponed.

Mr. Coupland, having sold his stud at the end of the season of 1871-72, was not long in getting together a fresh supply for the following season, and it is said that the fifty horses and more which were then housed in the famous long stable at Quorn and in other buildings were an exceedingly good lot, showing more quality than those he had possessed before, regard being had to their character as well as their appearance. In a run, however, which took place in February horses were at a discount, as the pack had the fun all to themselves. When hunting in the vicinity of Grace Dieu, the pack found a fox in a small plantation near One Barrow Lodge, and ran him at a pretty good pace up Timber Wood Hill. The field were a little bit behind, and when Tom Firr and a few

others reached the wood, they saw a leash of hounds running as hard as they could go some fields away, apparently with a breast-high scent. Every one supposed that these were the tail hounds of the pack, so on they went, and had a capital run towards Bardon Hill, but failed to find any more than the leash of hounds in front of them, for the all-sufficient reason that no other hounds were on the line. In the meantime the main body of the pack had started another fox and turned short to the left out of Timber Wood, and him they ran to ground without a single horseman being with them. Some of Lord Stamford's keepers viewed the pack racing along, and of course were surprised to see no one with them, and then assuming that the field had somehow or other been left behind, they managed to entice the hounds to Newtown Linford, where they shut them up in a stable, and a messenger was sent to Quorn to say what had become of them. Meantime the huntsman and his attendants were scouring the neighbourhood on horseback to find the missing pack, but of course without success.

Mention has already been made of Tom Firr, and as the end of the season 1871-72 saw the departure of Macbride, a halt may here be made to note the arrival of Firr as huntsman; and at the present moment (1898) he still occupies that proud position, which he has thus held for twenty-six years. A love for hunting, like wooden legs, is said to run in families, and it is only perhaps right that a short sketch of the worthy huntsman's life should be given.

Tom Firr, after being with sundry packs, went to the Cambridgeshire, then under the mastership of Mr. Barnett, and on leaving there he went to another plough country, the Craven, then under Mr. Theobald, after which he joined the Tedworth, when old George Carter hunted the hounds, and Jack Fricker was first whip. After one season there, he whipped in to the Quorn, under

John Goddard—that was in the first season of Mr. Clowes's mastership—and after one year there he left to join Lord Eglington in Scotland, under George Cox. His next step was to go to Colonel Anstruther Thomson as second whipper-in to the Pytchley, but at that time he could have had first whip's place in Norfolk; in fact he was apparently engaged, but having once tasted the sweets of the grass, he scarcely cared to continue to carry on in a plough country. While with Colonel Anstruther Thomson he gave so much satisfaction that when Mr. Lant, the master of the North Warwickshire, wanted a huntsman Colonel Thomson recommended Furr for the berth, which he obtained, and so stepped from the post of second whipper-in to that of huntsman, without ever having been first whip. In Warwickshire Tom Furr stayed three years, and gave great satisfaction to everybody, and showed capital sport. Then, when Macbride left the Quorn, Mr. Lant very kindly said he would not stand in Furr's way, so in 1872 he went to Mr. Coupland, and is now entering upon his twenty-seventh season as huntsman in the Quorn country, his period of office exceeding that of any other huntsman with the pack, unless perhaps it be that of old Jack Raven; and how many years he served under Mr. Meynell and Lord Sefton, nobody knows.

The Prince of Wales again paid a visit to Leicestershire, attending the Melton Steeplechases. His Royal Highness made a very short stay in the Midlands, however, and the only time on which he hunted was when the Quorn had a by-day at Gaddesby. They had a very good run by Billesdon Coplow, and the next run was also good, the second fox being really killed as soon as the pack reached Thurnby Spinney; but as a fresh one went away at the same moment, with the body of the pack at his brush, the huntsman, who did not know of the second fox being killed, brought his hounds quickly on the line of the fresh one, and this third fox was eventually run to ground. On this day the Prince of Wales met with a fall at a boggy place near Foxholes, but fortunately was not hurt. With him were Lord Wilton, Lord Gardner, Sir Frederick Johnstone, Sir Watkin Wynn, Lord Royston, and Colonel (now Sir) Dighton Probyn.

About the same time, too, were announced the deaths of two good sportsmen, well known in Leicestershire. Lord Hopetoun, once master of the Pytchley, died at Rome from heart disease, from which it is said he suffered for a long time, although for several years he had been accustomed to hunt six days a week, and rode long distances to covert and home. The second death was that of the Hon. H. Coventry, who succumbed to a paralytic stroke at his residence at Pickwell.

Towards the end of May 1873 the Quorn stud was sold at Tattersall's, when forty-six hunters realised 5836 guineas, giving an average of something like 127 guineas each; and the next event to notice is the gathering of the keepers and earth-stoppers of the Quorn Hunt at Willoughby, Loughborough, and Gaddesby, where every man announced that his particular district was full of foxes. What scheme of remuneration was formerly in vogue is not quite clear, but it appears that Mr. Coupland was the first to start the system of rewarding keepers by results, and to this no doubt was due the increased stock of foxes, for the country was very badly off when Mr. Coupland first entered upon his mastership. For the preceding three seasons the keepers had received the sum of ten shillings for each find which took place in coverts under their respective supervision,<sup>1</sup> and the season 1872-73 was perhaps, on the whole, one of the most successful the Quorn ever saw up to that time. It subsequently transpired that no fewer than 500 finds had been paid for at ten shillings apiece, which meant that the sum of £250 was distributed in gratuities to keepers, so perhaps it is no wonder that, on the new plan being started, the keepers saw that to preserve foxes was to do something to their own

<sup>1</sup> The usual condition is, that if a fox runs to ground in some hole in the coverts, which should have been stopped by the keeper on whose beat the fox was found, the keeper forfeits the money he would otherwise have received.

advantage. The superintendents, however, though they did their parts well, were energetically backed by the landowners, farmers, and occupiers of land in all directions, and perhaps the feeling towards fox-hunting was as good at that time as it had been before or has been since.

For some years it had been the custom at the time of the earth-stoppers' and keepers' dinner for those who had any claim for damages, loss of poultry, &c., to appear at the same time, and as many of the aggrieved tramped a good many miles to the rendezvous, they were also invited to partake of the feast after their claims had been fully investigated, and, if correct, paid. The total number present at the three places above mentioned was over 500, and the local committees to whom the claims were submitted attended, the master presiding upon each occasion, supported by a good many of the chief farmers in the district. In connection with the gathering at Gaddesby the business of investigating claims began at ten, and from that time until three o'clock, when the dinner took place, Mr. Coupland and the committee were working hard at investigations and the discharge of liabilities.

When August came round there was a hound show at Harrogate, where Lord Kesteven, Captain Percy Williams, and John Walker were the judges, while a dozen different kennels were represented. The Quorn were again successful, as in the class for unentered dog hounds the first prize went to Mr. Coupland's Rattler, by Factor — Rival, the latter a daughter of the old favourite, the Craven Albion. The champion cup for the best unentered hound in the yard was awarded to the same dog.

Like Mr. Musters, Mr. Coupland became so popular with the earth-stoppers that, on the opening day of the season 1873-74, they made him a present of a hunting-horn, the presentation being made, as a correspondent

wrote, in a speech of good honest Leicestershire by a patriarchal earth-stopper. In accepting it, the master of the Quorn returned thanks for the very handsome testimonial presented to him by keepers and earth-stoppers of the Quorn Hunt in the following words :—

I beg most sincerely to thank you, and I appreciate your gift far more than I can express, especially as I am told how great a number have subscribed to it. If we look back to three years ago, when there was scarcely a fox on this side of the country, I think we may certainly congratulate ourselves that your efforts to assist the fine sport of fox-hunting have been a complete success, and that this is the finest country in England. It has been said, I believe, that I have turned down foxes this year, but I appeal to the keepers and earth-stoppers now present if that is the case. I am not aware that a single fox has been turned down this year in this country, and the fine show we now have to go on with is the result of your exertions, coupled with the assistance the farmers have kindly afforded, and I venture to take this opportunity of thanking them most sincerely for all that they have done on my behalf to assist our sport.

In the February of 1874 the huntsman of the Quorn met with an accident, as in jumping a brook he strained the muscles of his back, reviving an injury he received in the previous year. In the same month hounds were running hard after their fox on the flat near Hoby, when they suddenly came to a full stop at what was once Hoby Mill. Like otter-hounds, the pack took to the water and swam to the other side of the river, while at the same time Mr. Tomkinson and Captain Smith, seeing no better way across, led their horses over a plank bridge, reaching the other side in safety. After them came Lord Grey de Wilton, Mr. G. Moore, and a hard-riding clergyman. They followed one another pretty closely, and their united weight proving too heavy for the fragile bridge it gave way beneath them ; the side railing broke away, and Lord Wilton was knocked over,

with his horse apparently on the top of him, the other two steeds speedily following their leader into the water, and there they were, all swimming and struggling together. Lord Wilton was knocked down a second time, and then his horse jumped over him, but luckily without inflicting an injury, and next the three horses swam out into the main stream, one of them not being captured until he had gone pretty nearly half a mile towards Leicester. Happily, however, neither of the three horses nor the three riders were one whit the worse.

No trace of the fox could be found after the water adventure, so Firr brought the hounds back again to the mill-dam, and there he found his fox comfortably hidden on the head of a willow tree. The pack was so eager to get at him that the fox thought it best to make a move, so he jumped into the water, and therein was killed.

This day, indeed, was by no means devoid of incident, for earlier in the day a fox led the hounds over the grass between Shoby and Asfordby. They then ran to the railway, reaching it at the level crossing near Frisby, where some score of the field took to riding along the line. Presently a coal train came in view, and those who had elected to ride on the line had to hurry off the best way they could, and were next compelled to cross under the line by a narrow wooden bridge, where the towing path of the Wreake runs beneath, and slippery paths had here to be encountered, while the archway of the bridge was scarcely higher than the horses' heads; and as the train drew near the last of the batch of horsemen grew extremely anxious, for those in front could only move at a slow foot-pace, and had one horse been frightened he might have brought grief *ad libitum* to all the others. This obstacle, however, was successfully surmounted, as also was that of a bridge over the railway with a hole in it; so all ended well.



About this time the covert fund question cropped up again, as Thursday, February 19th, the business preceding a by-day, saw a meeting convened to discuss the state of the covert fund. It then transpired that the country was indebted to Mr. Coupland to the extent of about £950, which sum it had cost him, over and above the covert subscriptions, to bring neglected gorses and spinneys into a state of proper efficiency. Lord Wilton was in the chair, explained the situation, and proposed an immediate payment to the master. No one, of course, could disagree with this, nor could any one deny the good run of continuous sport, so accordingly names were put down in the room for £450, while subsequently a further sum, and no doubt the whole of the amount required, was collected.

The spring of this year (1874) brought with it the death of Lord Rossmore, who hunted in Leicestershire, and who was killed at the Windsor Steeplechases while riding Lord Downshire's Harlequin in the 1st Life Guards' Challenge Cup. It was a singular coincidence that two or three years previously Lord Rossmore met with an accident in the same race, at the very same fence at which he was killed. On the first occasion he broke his collar-bone, and again, curiously enough, he was taken, on the occasion of his first accident, to the same room in the officers' quarters in which he afterwards died.

In connection with the close of the season 1873-74 a rather amusing story was current. The hounds, as usual, hunted during Holy Week, and among the regular followers was a gentleman extremely fond of hunting, and a constant attendant at as many of the fixtures as possible. He was, besides, a staunch High Churchman and ritualist. Before Lent had run its course, a friend asked him whether he intended to hunt during Holy Week. His companion, whose love of sport evidently

struggled with his scruples, replied, "Well, I don't know; I do not think it is right." "But where is the harm?" said the friend. "Well, I think there is a certain amount of harm," replied the other; "but if I do any hunting in Holy Week, I shall certainly come out in trousers."

The first week in August 1874 saw the holding of the Great Yorkshire Hound Show—one of those over which Mr. Thomas Parrington exercised so great an influence. The Quorn pack rather came to the fore, winning in the unentered class; but the year is memorable from the fact that Quorn Alfred (he came in a draft), by Mr. Garth's Painter, out of Affable, won in the stallion hound class; while Quorn Watchman, by Belvoir Rallywood, out of Belvoir Wanton; Alfred; Clasper, by Belvoir Charon, out of Royalty; and Rattler, by Factor, out of Rival, gained the first prize for the best two couples of entered hounds. Of Quorn Alfred it is needless to say much; he proved himself the mainstay of the kennel, and his name is venerated to the present day.

During cub-hunting in the season of 1874-75 the late Empress of Austria, with a suite described by a local chronicler as "consisting of seventeen attendants and four horses," went down to the Harborough Hotel, Melton Mowbray, to have a day's cub-hunting with the Belvoir, returning to London the next day, after inspecting the Belvoir kennels and stables. Four years later, while hunting in the Pytchley country, the Empress again visited Leicestershire, arriving at Kibworth station one morning at ten o'clock to meet Mr. Tailby's hounds at Burton Overy. The Empress was on this occasion, as usual, piloted by the late Captain Middleton, and there was an enormous field out.

On October 17, 1874, the hunting world was robbed of one of its best known characters in the person of Lord

Forester, who died at his seat, Willey Park, Shropshire, in the seventy-fourth year of his age, after having lived for some time in comparative retirement.

Lord Forester was a son of the first lord, who was better known as Cecil Forester, one of the thorns in the side of Mr. Meynell, who was accustomed to say, "First comes the fox out of a covert, then Cecil Forester, and then my hounds." He was born and lived a sportsman, and particularly a hunting man. During his undergraduate days at Oxford he was well known with Sir Thomas Mostyn's hounds, the Duke of Beaufort's, and the Duke of Grafton's. After hunting in Leicestershire for a short time on his own account he became master of the Belvoir in 1830, during the minority of the eldest son of the Duke of Rutland, and he remained at the head of that famous pack for something like twenty-eight seasons. About 1858 he married the widow of Lord Melbourne, and was presented at Syston with a testimonial, which represented in silver a scene with his hounds. Goodall was depicted in the act of dislodging a fox from a chestnut tree in Croxton Park, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Forester, Sir Thomas Whichcote, and Mr. Lickford (the last named the "Father of the Hunt") being grouped around, while a few couples of favourite hounds were also brought in. Lord Forester, who was an exceedingly handsome man, was, it may be remembered, introduced by Sir Francis Grant into the picture of "The Melton Breakfast." He at one time held some appointment in the Royal Household, but was never so well known in London as his brother, and successor to the title, General, or more familiarly known as Colonel Forester, Member for Wenlock, and who was for some time Father of the House of Commons.

Only a little later the Quorn men were grieved to hear of the death of Mrs. Coupland, the wife of the master, and on receipt of the mournful intelligence the hounds, which were to have met at Radcliffe-on-the-Wreake,<sup>1</sup> were kept in kennel.

<sup>1</sup> From what has been said before in connection with the decease of Tom Day and Sir Richard Sutton, this fixture had a curious connection with deaths in the Quorn country.

In December 1874 Lord Grey de Wilton, the well-known follower of the Quorn hounds, found himself in the County Court at the instance of the Melton Canal Company. One day, while following the Quorn, he rode his horse on to a foot-bridge belonging to the Canal Company, but the structure, which was really designed for foot passengers only, and was in a very shaky condition, gave way under his lordship and his horse, both being precipitated into the water. In the spirit of a sportsman Lord Wilton sent a man to estimate the damage, and his answer was that the job could be done for £5. Thereupon his lordship wrote to the Canal Company offering to pay the sum. Meantime the Highway Board appeared upon the scene, and compelling the Canal Company to make good the bridge, they spent over £20 on the work, applying to his lordship to pay £15 towards the expenses. Fortified by the decision of his expert, Lord Grey de Wilton declined to pay this sum, hence the action. When, however, it came on for hearing, the Canal Company's solicitor suggested that the matter should be referred to an arbitrator, and the facts were laid before Mr. William Garner, one of the town wardens, whose decision was that the £5 his lordship had previously offered amply sufficed to make good the damage.

About this time we find a writer lamenting the crowds that used to come out with the Quorn on Fridays, and the story is told of a hard-riding visitor from another Hunt who had been on the hounds' backs pretty well all day, and the huntsman was gradually losing his patience. There was also another follower who was somewhat given to overriding the hounds. The last-named gentleman measured his length over a somewhat formidable fence, while the visitor from another country was in the act of riding at a place just as the hounds were feeling their way to it. The huntsman







*The Crier*      *W. Gordon Ditch*      *Peter Wood*      *W. John St. John*      *Edmund*      *W. G. G. G. G.*      *H. G. G. G.*

FULL CRY.—WISSINDINE PASTURE. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.



*Mr. G. G. G.*      *Great House Grove*      *Kettle Church*      *Road to M. G.*      *K. G. G. G.*

THE DIATH.—VIEW OF KETTLEBY. DRAWN BY H. ALKEN.





was heard to make some remark as to the direction the fox might probably have taken, whereupon the visitor promptly charged a tremendous great place, and came an "imperial crowner" into the next field. Then the huntsman, much relieved in his mind, gently blew his horn, and followed up his fox, free from what advertisements call "encumbrances."

Lord Stamford still kept up his interest in the Hunt, and was occasionally out with them, and in the February of 1875 sustained a somewhat bad fall, lacerating the muscles of his back, a mishap which necessitated keeping his bed for some days, while at the same time the attention of the landed proprietors and members of the Quorn Hunt was drawn to the annual report, just then circulated by the Hunt Covert Fund Committee, which showed a deficit of £400. Thereupon some resolutions were come to, among them being one to the effect that, having regard to the excellent manner in which Mr. Coupland hunted the Quorn country, and with a view to relieve him of additional burden, all strangers should be called upon to subscribe to the current expenses of the pack, and a local committee was thereupon appointed to aid in carrying this resolution into effect. The document embodying the proposal was signed by Lord Wilton, Sir Frederick Fowke, Mr. Little Gilmour, Mr. P. Herrick, and other influential members of the Hunt.

Mr. Coupland had all along been very deservedly popular, not only with the followers of the Quorn, for whom he catered so well, but also with the farmers for having such a keen regard to their interests; while he subsequently put another laurel leaf in his crown by placing at the disposal of the farmers, free of all charge, a thoroughbred stallion, for the convenience of those who might be desirous of breeding hunters. Though for family reasons he was unable to be present at the

Croxton Park and Burrough Hill Races, he nevertheless gave the Quorn Cup, which he instituted when he first took the pack.

Mr. Herrick, above mentioned, a well-known Leicestershire sportsman, did not long survive, as in February 1876, being then in his eighty-first year, he joined the great majority. On the morning of his death he was apparently quite well, in spite of his years, and as the hounds met at Woodhouse Eaves, close to his seat, Beaumanor Park, he went out on horseback, attended by his groom. A fox being found, Mr. Herrick took part in the run, and when they had finished with the fox, the hounds went on to Bradgate Park; but Mr. Herrick, not feeling quite strong enough, rode home, and died very shortly after his return.

Yet another hound show took place in July 1875, this time at Alexandra Park. Hitherto hound shows, as will have been seen in the foregoing pages, had been confined almost exclusively to Yorkshire. Nevertheless a few attempts had been made to bring foxhound shows into the South. The first was at Islington in 1866, and the second at the Crystal Palace in 1874. At Islington, it is true, the Duke of Beaufort, and Mr. Nevill, of Chilland, in Hampshire, sent some hounds, but at the Crystal Palace not a single foxhound was there, though their absence was no doubt owing to the fear of hydrophobia, which was at that time very rife. Mr. Martin, however, who organised the Alexandra Park Show, had special advantages, and he managed to make a success where others had failed. In fact, it was said that the entries of foxhounds exceeded those seen at any other show, not excepting the Yorkshire gatherings. The management, however, had not the experience of the present Peterborough executive, so the accommodation for the hounds was by no means all that could be desired; and as the hinges of the doors were tacked on very

lightly, hounds were constantly forcing gates away and running about all over the place. A boarded stage on the grass did duty for flagstones, while a covered pavilion was spacious enough to protect any reasonable number of people from sun or rain. The day was certainly unfavourable, for rain fell intermittently; but the capacity of the pavilion was not put to a very severe test, for the spectators numbered no more than about a hundred. Mr. Henry Villebois, Mr. Hope Barton, and Mr. Leicester Hibbert were the judges, and in Class II., for the best two couples of entered dog hounds, the Quorn were successful with Watchman, Alfred, Comrade, and Rattler; while in another class, for the best two couples of entered hounds under twenty-three inches, the Quorn were again to the fore. The Quorn Alfred gained the championship for entered hounds, and the same famous hound brought to Tom Firr a cup given by Messrs. Spratt, for the huntsman of the pack showing the best hound in the show. Among the other competing packs were the Queen's staghounds, the Duke of Beaufort's, the Old Berkshire, the Blackmore Vale, Brocklesby, Essex, North Herefordshire, Lord Portsmouth's, East Essex, West Kent, and the West Norfolk.

Only a week or two later there was another hound show at Driffield, on which occasion the rival kennels were the Burton, the North Shropshire, Quorn, Brocklesby, the Fitzwilliam, Mr. Cradock's (now the Marquis of Zetland's), the Tynedale, Sir Harcourt Johnston's, the York and Ainsty, Rufford, and Bramham Moor. Parson Russell, from Devonshire, Sir Reginald Graham, and Mr. John Hill were the judges; and here the Quorn were again successful in the two-couple class with Watchman, Alfred, Rattler and Comrade, while Alfred showed his merit by again obtaining honours as the best hound in the show.

The repository of Messrs. Warner, Shephard, and Wade is now well enough known, but for something like twenty years prior to 1875 the firm sold horses in the Bell Paddock. In the above-mentioned year, however, the new repository was opened, proceedings beginning with a luncheon, at which Mr. Coupland presided, supported by Lord Combermere, Sir Frederick Fowke, and the Mayor of Leicester. On this occasion the Quorn cub-hunters were sold, and the thirteen put up for auction realised 1150 guineas.

In February 1876 Firr again came to grief, this time through a wire fence. He was in a carriage drive, flanked by wire on both sides, and while he was cheering his hounds, his horse sidled up to the wire fence and one of his legs caught between the strands; becoming frightened at the entanglement he set to work to plunge, and eventually fell over the huntsman, giving him a very severe fall. He was taken to a house at Thurnby, where on examination it was found that, though much bruised and shaken, no bones were broken.

Towards the close of the season 1875-76 the Prince of Wales visited Colonel (now General) Owen Williams at the Old Club, Melton. It was the Prince's wish that no demonstration should be made, and his request was of course complied with. He dined at the Old Club with Colonel Owen Williams, Captain Montague, Mr. Sloane Stanley, Captain Owen Young, Lord Carrington, Captain Glynn (of H.M.S. *Serapis*, in which vessel the Prince of Wales went to India), the Marquis of Huntly, Sir Lister Kaye, the Hon. Hugh Lowther (now Earl of Lonsdale), Captain Wingfield, and a few others; and he afterwards enjoyed a day or two's hunting in the neighbourhood. In the spring of 1877 the Prince paid another visit to Leicestershire, and had a quiet day from Lowesby with the Quorn.

The summer of 1876 once more saw the Quorn com-

peting at a hound show, this time at Skipwirth-in-Craven, under the auspices of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society. The kennels represented were the Atherstone, Bedale, Brocklesby, Burton, South Durham, Quorn, and Lord Zetland's, but some of them scratched at the last moment. The entries were smaller than usual; but the judges, Mr. John Hill of Thornton, and John Walker (Sir Watkin Wynn's huntsman), awarded sundry prizes to the Quorn—Governor, Woodman, Watchman, and Wild Boy winning in the two couples of entered hounds class. The Quorn Alice was the best unentered hound, and the Quorn Rapid the best brood bitch. The championship cup was given to Atherstone Somerset, but many were of opinion that it should have been given to Alice, who, by the way, was by the famous Alfred, out of Dewdrop.

In the spring of 1877 there was recorded from Melton an instance of how ill-advisable it is to act upon impulse. A noble lord who was hunting in the neighbourhood came down at a bullfinch, but was luckily unhurt. His horse, however, remained motionless, and was to all appearance dead. The rider thought the animal had broken its back, so a gun was sent for, and the horse was shot. On a post-mortem examination being made, however, it was discovered that he had sustained no injury whatever, but was merely knocked out of time, as the saying goes, and had the pin test been applied the life of a valuable horse might have been saved.

From a dead horse to a dyed one is but a step, and another story was current in Melton. A lady was staying at a house a few miles off, and discovered that her bottle of aureoline, of which she made frequent use, had been left behind by her maid. A groom was despatched to fetch it, but unluckily he put it into his pocket, and while riding home the bottle was broken; the "gilded essence" flowed down one side of the mare he was

riding, which was really a dark brown, but for several days afterwards her appearance was a curious mixture of gold streaks on one side, and in the Hunt the mare was promptly christened "Aureoline."

In the April of 1877 the Queen's staghounds paid a visit to the Cottesmore country, meeting at Barleythorpe, Lord Hardwick being then the master.<sup>1</sup>

There was, it need hardly be said, an enormous field, and there was a breakfast at the hall, where Lord Lonsdale entertained a great many people; and at ten minutes past twelve the deer-van drove into the park, and a deer called the Baron was uncarted, making his way towards Langholm. Then turning to his left, he took a capital line, so far as the spectators were concerned, as the deer could be seen going on leisurely for more than a mile. After fifteen minutes' law, Frank Goodall (who had formerly been huntsman to Mr. Tailby) laid on the pack, and a capital run succeeded, though most of it took place in Rutlandshire and not in Leicestershire. Lady Dixie was not then so averse to stag-hunting as she has subsequently shown herself to be, for we read that she was present, and that none went better until Launde Brook brought her to grief.

The August of 1877 saw another hound show at York, on the Knavesmire, but on this occasion the Quorn only succeeded in taking one prize, for entered bitches, with the badger pied Comely.

So well had Mr. Coupland worked as head of the

<sup>1</sup> In olden times the Queen's staghounds used to go to Aylesbury for a week or two, and also to the New Forest, while in addition they have made sundry excursions out of their country. About the year 1849 they had a day in Berkshire, meeting at Buckland; in 1868 the Duke of Beaufort invited them to meet at Troy House, in the Badminton country; in 1869 they again met in the old Berkshire country, at Goosey Green, where a field of about a thousand people were present; and in November 1882, during the mastership of Lord Cork, the Royal hounds were taken to the town of Frome, at the coming of age of Lord Dungarvan, Lord Cork's son; while later still they met on the downs near Winchester.

Hunt, that it was noticed in the year 1877 that the pack had very much improved in quality. It was said that they had been rather mute before, but Mr. Coupland bred far more for music, and altogether the pack rose in every one's estimation.

In the summer a rather curious function took place at the instigation of Colonel Burnaby. It had occurred to him that a dinner should be given to old soldiers of the county of Leicestershire who were medal-holders, the dinner to be given on the anniversary of the battle of Inkerman; so under the gallant gentleman's superintendence a banquet first took place, and afterwards an assault-at-arms was arranged. Officers, hunting men, and many others subscribed freely in support of the project, while the Duke of Cambridge and the Prince of Wales signified their approval of the movement by joining the list of subscribers. Venison was roasted in the market-place, and soup was cooked in a brazen vessel presented to the town of Leicester by John of Gaunt. All the old soldiers enjoyed themselves immensely. There were some hundreds of them, the report said, and the medals displayed showed a record, as the chairman happily stated, from Corunna to Coomassie. One old fellow was carried to the dais to tell how he entered the army in 1803, and it is mentioned as a somewhat unusual circumstance that every man kept as sober as though he had been on parade.

In Leicestershire, we are told, every man, woman, and child is taught to venerate and preserve the fox; but unluckily there have been a good many exceptions, and one of them came to light in 1878. A third of the country was said to be exceedingly short of foxes, and one gentleman was hinted at who, though a hunting man, allowed his keepers to kill foxes; while it was said that a landed proprietor, whose father was a staunch preserver of foxes, did not take after him, that his

coverts were always drawn blank, and once when hounds ran through, pheasants rose in hundreds, while after this five hundred were shot in two days. It was thought that the gentleman in question would very likely before long solicit the suffrages of the electors, and a follower of the Quorn pointed out that it would be well to remember his indifference to the fox-hunting interest. Whether he ever did come forward as a candidate for Parliamentary honours I am unable to say.

The Empress of Austria paid another visit to Leicestershire in 1878, and just afterwards Lord James Douglas sustained a very nasty fall. His horse put his foot in a newly-made drain while galloping across an open field. He was riding wide of the hounds, and so no one observed the fall. When Lord James came down the sun was shining brightly, but when he returned to consciousness he found a labourer standing over him by the light of the moon. Thanks to the labourer's good offices he was taken to a house, and in due time recovered.

A further proof of Mr. Coupland's popularity is shown from the fact that in 1879 the members of the Quorn Hunt made up their minds to present the master with a fitting gift in commemoration of his approaching marriage, while the tenant-farmers on the Billesdon side gave him two handsome silver soup-tureens.

One event which happened towards the close of the season 1878-79 deserves to be mentioned, and that is the death of that famous steeplechase horse, the Doctor. He ran second in the Grand National of 1870, and when a turn in his temper rendered him useless for steeplechasing, he was made over to Mr. Custance as a hunter, and carried him brilliantly for several seasons. As that famous ex-jockey writes in his book, published not long ago: "The club-footed horse was well known in Leicestershire; no fence was big enough to stop him, and no hounds ran too fast for him. His end came



through his breaking his shoulder in jumping on to the stump where a tree had been cut down."

The opening day of 1879-80 saw the Rev. John Russell at Kirby Gate. He was then something like eighty-four years old, and had journeyed all the way from Devonshire to obtain an insight into the hunting countries comprised in Leicestershire. The season was only a few days old when a well-known Meltonian emulated the feat of Mr. Thornton, when mounted on the famous Hercules (who, as John Leech showed us in "Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour," took a draper's shop), by his horse jumping into a tobacconist's. Although much damage was done to the stock-in-trade, both horse and rider escaped injury.

For some time Mr. Coupland's health had been none of the best, and he had been out of the saddle for some time, but in January 1880 the master had so far recovered as to be able to take the field again, which he did amidst the congratulations of his followers.

By the year 1880 a good many Leicestershire hunting men had probably forgotten the existence of John Goddard, whose death was announced in September of the above-mentioned year.

In the following year the Quorn Hunt lost a very good friend in Mr. Andrew Heseltine, who for so many years lived at the farmhouse adjoining the famous covert at Gartree Hill, Little Dalby. Up to within a few years of his death, no farmer in the country followed hounds with more zest than he did, and for a generation he was known to be one of the foremost hunting men. He farmed under Mr. E. B. Hartopp, and to that gentleman's honour be it said, when the tide of fortune turned against his old tenant with his increasing years, he gave him a good pension. "Old Andrew," as he was familiarly called, was one of the staunchest preservers of foxes in the covert that lay almost at his own door, and

was no more zealous about stock than he was about the foxes; and if ever his covert was drawn blank the old man was terribly upset. For many years his house was always open to any hunting man who called, and when, through failing health, he was no longer able to hunt, he still entertained the same interest for the sport as in the days when he was capable of holding his own in the best of company.

The February of 1881 brought with it the announcement that Mr. Coupland would give up the country at the end of the season owing to the insufficient amount of subscriptions, and then the rumour gained ground that the Duke of Portland would be his successor. This was stated in the *Times*, but at a meeting held shortly afterwards it was authoritatively stated that the statement was a fabrication. At the aforesaid meeting Sir Frederick Fowke took the chair, and stated that the object of the meeting was to see if sufficient funds could not be raised to obviate the necessity of so popular a master resigning. This, by the way, was an adjourned meeting. A heavy debt was owing to Mr. Coupland for the covert fund, and it was said that if £4500 a year could be raised Mr. Coupland would continue to hunt the country. Among various suggestions made was one that the fixtures should not be advertised, and this view apparently was adopted; for, through the remainder of Mr. Coupland's reign, no announcement of the fixtures appeared in the *Leicester Journal*. A tenant farmer said that he and his friends were full against advertising; but it may very much be doubted whether the suppression of the announcement of fixtures diminishes the field by half-a-dozen. If any one happens to be staying in a hunting country, it is not difficult to find out where unadvertised hounds meet, for perhaps the worst kept secret is the names of the places at which a pack is due during the week.

On Tuesday the 7th of March 1882, there passed away one of Melton's brightest stars, one of Leicestershire's best sportsmen, the Earl of Wilton, of Egerton Lodge, Melton Mowbray, where he died.

His career in the world of sport was somewhat unique in its way. It was about fifty years before his death that he purchased Egerton Lodge from Lord Darlington; but for nearly ten years before that the earl was hunting in Leicestershire, and was still a bold rider to hounds when his eighty-second birthday had come and gone. He was hunting when George III. ruled England, and he was hunting during the season 1881-82. The Earl of Wilton was born on the 30th December 1799, and on the turf his colours were registered so long ago as 1828, though they underwent several changes down to the year 1861.

When Lord Wilton first began to make his mark in Leicestershire, Sir Henry Peyton, who, together with his son, were said to be the equals of Mr. Smith, senior, and his son Assheton, was a well-known performer with hounds; while Lord Forester, the fifth Earl of Jersey, Lord Delamere, Mr. Edge, the great friend of Assheton Smith, and Sir Francis Burdett were hunting with the Quorn, and perhaps not one of them was Lord Wilton's superior over a country. He was built for a horseman—"attenuated Wilton," Mr. Bernal Osborne called him in the "Chaunt of Achilles"; his hands were of the best, and not being a heavy weight he had a great predilection for thoroughbred horses, and for some seasons he rode the thoroughbred stallion Thyrsis, on which he once pounded the whole of the Belvoir field in a famous run from Sproxton Thorns. His manner of riding to hounds was perfect; he was never in a hurry, and as Dick Christian used to say, when other first flight men found their horses beaten, Lord Wilton would apparently just begin to ride. But then he had a wonderful eye for country; he knew every fence in Leicestershire, and could pick out the most practicable place in each. The story has been told how, on hearing, after a good day, some of those who had taken part in it describing the double oxers and all kinds of yawners they had jumped, he would say, "Oh, dear, where do they find these terrible places? I never come across them." The fact, however, that he set the Belvoir, as just now mentioned, would serve to show that he did sometimes come across a big place—a place big enough, at all events, to stop everybody else. At the same

time it must be remembered that Lord Wilton never rode bad horses ; he never professed to lead the field or hold a good place on a raw four-year-old or a poor fencer. In his best stud-groom, Thomas Godwin, he had a most valuable servant, for not only did he turn out his horses in excellent condition, but he saw to the schooling of as many as did not quite know their business. Godwin was born in 1786, and when he was past work, was pensioned off at Heaton Park, where for some time, during the era of the Heaton Park Races, he had cleared the course and acted as starter. Lord Wilton sent for him to stay at Egerton Lodge, and there the old man breathed his last. The Heaton Park Meeting Lord Wilton established in his own domain in 1827 ; and he was himself a most capable jockey, equal to holding his own against most of those so-called amateur riders of that day, when rules were less stringent than it has since been found necessary to make them. As an instance of Lord Wilton's prowess in the saddle, it may be mentioned that between the years 1843 and 1861 he won the Granby Handicap at Croxton Park on seven occasions.

On the death of Lord Yarborough the Earl of Wilton was elected Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron. His first yacht was the *Zarifa*, originally a slave schooner ; Lord Wilton, after using her for some seasons, sold her to go to Russia, and she was wrecked at Sebastopol. His next yacht bore the same name as the first, and selling her to a Liverpool merchant, he built the *Zara* on the lines of the *America*, and then, like many another yachtsman, he abandoned sail power for steam, his last ship being the steam yacht *Palatine*. The "Chaunt of Achilles" noted the many-sidedness of this great sportsman, and makes mention of the fact that he was among other things an organist. The Chaunt was written about the year 1836, and whether Lord Wilton was accustomed then, as he did in the late fifties and early sixties, to play the anthem at the Chapel Royal, St. James's, during the London season, I do not know. Under Lord Derby's administration, Lord Wilton twice held the post of State Steward to the Queen. Thomas Grosvenor, second Earl of Wilton, was the second son of Robert, second Earl Grosvenor, and first Marquis of Westminster, and of his wife Lady Eleanor, only daughter of Thomas, first Earl of Wilton. Upon the death of his maternal grandfather in 1814, the Hon. Thomas Grosvenor succeeded to the title of Earl of Wilton, and he enjoyed the possession of the estates for a period of sixty-eight years. In

1821, on attaining his majority, he took the surname and arms of Egerton. When the first Lord Wilton died, his grandson and successor was at Westminster School, and on leaving there he went to Christ Church, Oxford.

Shortly after the date of the February meeting, Mr. Musters, who had been Mr. Coupland's predecessor, came out for a day with the Quorn near Gaddesby, and while hounds were running hard held a foremost place. After landing over a fence his horse fell, but though Mr. Musters sustained no injury from the downfall, before he could regain his feet he was jumped on by somebody else, and left insensible. As soon as he came to himself he made his way to Gaddesby, whence he was driven to Syston station, and though no bones were broken, he was much bruised and shaken, and had to keep to his room for some time.

For many years there had been few more venerated names than that of Sir Arthur Grey Hazelrigg, and the men of South Leicestershire so fully realised their indebtedness to so good a sportsman, who, though not at that time a follower of the hounds, was most enthusiastic in the cause of hunting, that they determined to present him with a testimonial. The subscription was limited to a couple of guineas, and money came in so plentifully that two very handsome silver bowls were purchased, the Hazelrigg arms being engraven upon the shields, while the bowls themselves bore the inscription: "Presented to Sir Arthur Grey Hazelrigg, Bart., by friends hunting in South Leicestershire." One might have thought that the presentation would have been made in strictly orthodox form, but such was not the case, as the testimonial, for good and sufficient reasons, was forwarded to Moseley Hall, the seat of the recipient.

About the same time, too, Mr. Adam Arnst painted a portrait of Tom Furr, from which a lithograph portrait was published by Messrs. Benyon & Co. of Cheltenham.

It was said to be very good, and was eagerly bought up. As already mentioned, Tom Firr was never a first whip, having given up the second whip's place with Colonel Anstruther Thomson to become huntsman to the North Warwickshire.

Some of the quarry people in Leicestershire had many years before proved themselves somewhat inimical to fox-hunting, and at odd times they do not appear to have improved. In the spring of 1883 a number of men were at work, and as a Mr. Leatham was trying to make his way out of a spinney, he asked a group of the quarrymen where he could find the best place. They pointed out a spot, which they said would be all right; so taking their advice, he sent his horse at a somewhat formidable fence, and landed in a stone-pit about twenty feet deep, though fortunately neither his horse nor himself suffered any injury; but the accident might have been a very serious one. The perpetrators of this little joke gathered on the bank at the top, and laughed heartily at the result of taking their advice.<sup>1</sup>

The spring of 1883 saw the completion of the picture painted to the order of Messrs. Dickinson, of New Bond Street, "A Meet of the Quorn Hounds at Baggrave Hall" (1881-82), the portraits in which were painted by Mr. J. B. Gibson, who just before had been responsible for the portraits in the picture of "A Meet of the Four-in-Hand Driving Club."

Not long afterwards, however, the Quorn Hunt had to lament the death of General Burnaby, whose residence was in the best part of the country, and who was instrumental in getting the Prince of Wales to plant the gorse

<sup>1</sup> In strong contrast to this unsportsman-like conduct is that of the quarrymen and miners in Lord Fitzwilliam's Hunt, who, in the summer of 1898, subscribed to purchase for Frank Bartlett, Lord Fitzwilliam's huntsman, a case of the best Sheffield cutlery, which they presented to him in token of the esteem in which he was held, for both the master and his huntsman are scrupulously careful in showing the quarrymen as much sport as possible.

which bore his name ; while all the Baggrave coverts were regarded as sure finds, and had over and over again been the starting-points of good gallops. It was to the Baggrave coverts that most masters returned if sport failed elsewhere. General Burnaby, however, never did things by halves, and when his Parliamentary duties became absorbing Baggrave saw but little of him ; while his coverts were not so well tended in his absence as they had been when he was there to look after them. It was a somewhat curious coincidence that the general, who was such a strong partisan of the Quorn Hunt, was one of the most enthusiastic in voting for the severance of the Billesdon side from the parent country. This by no means suggests that he was wrong, but it is curious that such a staunch friend of the Quorn should have been in favour of the country being cut in two. In his younger days the general rode well to hounds, while there was no more hospitable house in the country than Baggrave Hall.

Mention, by the way, of the Prince of Wales' Gorse reminds one that after General Burnaby's death, Mr. Trew, who rented Baggrave, offered to replant the gorse, which had failed, at his own cost. The guardians of the Baggrave property were naturally extremely grateful to Mr. Trew for his generous offer, but knowing the interest that the late General Burnaby had always taken in that covert, thought that the whole recuperation should be undertaken by the estate in as efficient a manner as possible, the trustees being quite sure that they would be acting in accordance with what would have been the wishes of the late occupant ; and it is needless to say that both the master and the members of the Hunt thanked Mr. Trew very heartily for his most sporting offer.

If the end of the year 1883 and the first few days of 1884 were not marked by the very best of luck, ample

amends were made just afterwards by an excellent day's sport on Monday, January 7. In the morning hounds ran fast for fifty-three minutes, making what was estimated a six-mile point; while in the afternoon they ran hard for half-an-hour without anything worthy of really being called a check. Nearly every horse was knocked up, or the pursuit might have been continued. Both runs took the hounds into the Belvoir territory, and both were run over a splendid country. The hounds met in the morning at Old Dalby, among those present being Mr. Coupland, Lady Wilton, Lady Cardigan, Lord Belper, the Messrs. and Miss Chaplin, the Duke of Portland, Lord Manners, &c. Neither run, however, ended with a kill.

Only a few days afterwards Mr. Hedworth Barclay met with a somewhat severe accident, his horse falling at a big fence, and rolling over its rider, who clung to the reins, while the horse, in his endeavours to regain his feet, kicked Mr. Barclay twice on the head, rendering him unconscious; but the Quorn men were glad to hear, on inquiry the next day, that he was progressing favourably.

At this time (1884) Lord Lonsdale, who had been for a short time master of the Blankney, met by invitation at Scraftoft Hall, in the Quorn country, the hounds, men, and horses travelling by special train to Leicester. The Blankney hounds had been bought by Lord Lonsdale from Mr. Chaplin, and represented what careful breeding had done for the pack handed over by Lord Henry Bentinck. The first item of the day was a run with a ringing fox from Scraftoft Gorse, and he went to ground between Scraftoft and Billesdon Coplow. Another fox found at the Coplow gave a gallop to the Cottesmore Woods. The pack had a good deal of the fun to themselves; but near Tilton Wood a fresh fox jumped up in a fallow, and him they drove through the



chain of coverts as far as Launde Wood, which was reached in about fifty minutes. Forcing him out of the covert, they swung to the right, and bearing round by Loddington, clashed with Sir Bache Cunard's hounds, which were also running hard, the two packs going on for some distance under the leadership of Lord Lonsdale; but so many foxes were on foot that presently hounds were whipped off.

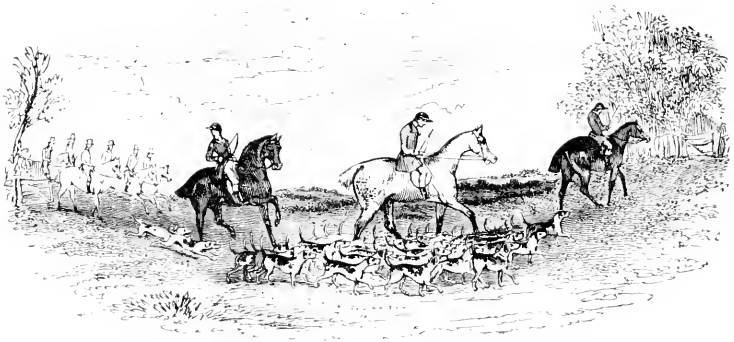
The close of the season 1883-84 saw the end of the successful mastership of Mr. Coupland, and so much had his efforts to show sport been appreciated, that it was at once resolved to present him with a testimonial. The subscription was limited to £5, and the circular was signed by the Duke of Portland, Lord Wilton, and the Hon. Mr. Curzon, M.P.; and when the Quorn met at Mr. Ernest Chaplin's house, Brooksby Hall, on Friday, January 30, advantage was taken of the occasion to present Mr. Coupland with a silver dinner-service.

In April 1884 a meeting of the Hunt was held at the Bell Hotel, Leicester, to consider what was to be done in the way of finding a successor. It appeared that one offer only had been received, and that was from Lord Manners. His lordship's terms were that the kennels at Quorn should be put into proper repair; that he should have a subscription of £2500 a year; and that there should be a covert fund of £1500 a year, under the control of a committee appointed for that purpose, who would pay covert rents, damages, poultry bill, &c. Lord Manners confessed that he would rather have the disbursing of the covert fund in his own hands, but, understanding that the feeling of the committee ran in an opposite direction, he would not press it, and, on the proposition of Lord Wilton, the offer was accepted.

Mr. Knight made a somewhat practical suggestion, that there should be a special fund to provide for

compensating small farmers for the damage sustained by them. He said he knew certain men who were occupying from thirty to forty acres apiece to suffer annually to the extent of about £10. They received nothing in return, and he rather feared that unless something were done for them they would not feel inclined to put up with the loss for very much longer, in which event wire might be found throughout the district.

At this same meeting Mr. Praed proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Coupland for his long and valuable services as master of the Quorn, a proposition which, it is needless to say, was carried unanimously, for Mr. Coupland had shown excellent sport, and was most popular with all classes. In the spring of this same year (1884) the ex-master's horses were sold by Messrs. Warner, Shephard, & Wade at Leicester, when twenty-five were sold at an average of £80, 14s.



## CHAPTER XII

LORD MANNERS (1884-1886)

CAPTAIN WARNER (1886-1890)

EARL OF LONSDALE



## CHAPTER XII

### L O R D M A N N E R S

1884-1886

AS already mentioned, Lord Manners, who won the Grand National in 1882 on his own horse Seaman, succeeded Mr. Coupland, and about his first official duty was to preside at the puppy show held at the end of August 1884. There had been some talk of removing the kennels to another spot, but eventually it was determined they should remain at Quorn, and, in accordance with Lord Manners's wish, the committee spent about £1600 in repairing damages, &c., and when the puppy show was held the work was hardly completed. Lord Ferrers, Frank Gillard of the Belvoir, and G. Shepherd of the South Notts, were the judges, the young entry consisting of six and a half couples of dogs and eight and a half couples of bitches. Lord Manners gave the usual luncheon, and a very pleasant afternoon was spent.

It was just about this time that the wise determination was arrived at of securing the hounds for the country.<sup>1</sup>

Mention has been made more than once of the clashing of packs, and towards the end of December 1884 the Quorn and the Belvoir had a run together which has probably not yet been forgotten by those who happened to take part in it. The Quorn hounds met at Ellar's Gorse, and the Belvoir at Harby; both packs

<sup>1</sup> See page 30

ran fast, the Quorn *viâ* Sherbroke Covert, and the Belvoir in the vale by the Curate's Gorse. At Flint Hill Spinney it was that both packs met, there being two foxes in covert. Whether a fresh fox jumped up, or whether both packs went away with one of the hunted foxes, is not certain; but a rattling good gallop took place from a spinney to Dalby Osier-bed, where the fox was pulled down, the two packs having run together for about forty minutes, and each having made something like a seven-mile point.

Lord Manners's short mastership was unfortunately marked on the whole by a bad scenting-time. Some good runs, of course, took place, but as a rule scent was indifferent; while he was confronted by another difficulty, as for a year or two before he took the hounds scent had lain so well that nearly all the old foxes had been killed off. As every one knows, without a certain proportion of elders really good sport is next to impossible, young foxes never running, as a rule, quite so boldly as the older ones, especially on good scenting-days; and it is stated that the bulk of those in the country when Lord Manners took the hounds simply ran about in circles, after the manner of hares.

It should have been mentioned before that when Lord Manners became master it was resolved to advertise on no more than three days a week, the Friday fixture being kept a secret, in order to try to avoid the crowd; though, as already remarked, it may be doubted whether the new departure appreciably diminished the fields.

In 1884 Tom Firr had the misfortune to break his collar-bone; while in the summer of the next year Leicestershire had to lament the death of Major Clagett, who was well known with the Quorn, although perhaps he was more often out with the Cottesmore. He returned from India in 1864, married the widow of Lord

Harborough, and took up his residence at Stapleford Park, near Melton Mowbray, a place which for many years, it may be remembered, had been not only rigorously closed against foxhounds, but had its coverts studded with dog-spears. Lady Harborough, however, removed these engines, and gave the hounds free access to the coverts.

In the first year of Lord Manners's mastership there died, at Eastwell Rectory, a sporting clergyman who was revered throughout the length and breadth of Leicestershire, the Rev. Edward Bullen, who was in his eighty-ninth year at the time of his death. At the age of five years he followed his father's harriers on a pony, and then for more than eighty years he was an ardent follower of the Quorn. In his heaviest days he never scaled more than nine stone, so he had no difficulty in mounting himself, and being a superlative horseman, whatever he rode carried him to the front. One of his horses was a chestnut, which roared like a bull, but carried him through deep ground and over any fence which intervened. In fact he was really a horse whose noise did not stop him.

It should not be left unsaid that Lord Manners, in his last year of mastership, came to the front in making Adam's Gorse a better covert than perhaps it had ever been before. When Sir Richard Sutton guided the fortunes of the Quorn there were several unconnected patches of gorse, at no great distance, surrounding a spinney near Ashby Folville, and hence it was that the covert was called a gorse. These patches, however, being unfenced, the cattle exterminated them, and eventually only a few straggling plants were to be seen. For several years, therefore, there was no shelter for a fox, except in a somewhat hollow spinney, and the term "gorse," when that gorse was broken down, was certainly a misnomer. Then Lord Manners came forward, and

with the consent of Mr. Parry, who owned the place, had enclosed at his own expense three or four acres of ground and sowed them with gorse. The enclosure was away from the road, sheltered and surrounded on every side, and it seemed a most desirable covert for foxes to take up their abode in.

On New Year's Day, in Lord Manners's last year of mastership, a somewhat peculiar accident occurred at Syston, which happily was not attended with the fatal results which might very easily have been its accompaniment. A couple of hunting men were returning home after a good run, and were jogging along at the rate of about six miles an hour, the one on the road, the other on the footpath, a crime for which he might now be severely punished by the authorities. A vehicle drawn by one horse passed the two riders and shortly afterwards came into collision with a carriage, the evening being very dark. One wheel of the carriage was knocked completely off, the occupants being thrown out, and the horse then rushed off with the shafts dangling at its hocks. A little further on it came into collision with the horse of the man who was riding in the road, and the shock was so great—it being what the Americans would term a "head-end collision"—that the necks of both horses were broken, both falling dead together in the middle of the road. Neither the rider nor driver, however, was too much hurt to be taken to his respective home in a cab.



## CAPTAIN WARNER

1886-1890

ON the retirement of his predecessor it was certainly in the fitness of things that Captain Warner should be Lord Manners's successor, as his father had sometime previously purchased the historic Quorndon Hall. The customary meeting of members was held at the Bell Hotel, Leicester, during April, for the purpose of appointing Lord Manners's successor, Sir Frederick Fowke again finding himself in the presidential chair, when the announcement he had to make was that Captain Warner had offered to take over the Quorn hounds on the same terms as the late master had done, that is to say, on a subscription of £4000 a year, £2500 to be paid to the master, and £1500 for the poultry claims and covert fund, &c. The committee recommended that Captain Warner's offer should be accepted, and the motion was carried with only one dissentient.

Then it was that Mr. W. F. Miles rose to his feet and, alluding to a meeting of farmers which had been held a day or two before, asked if Captain Warner was aware of what had been done. Some discussion followed, and then a letter, written by Mr. Thomas Nuttall, one of the farmers in question, was read by the chairman. The material parts of the letter were as follows :—

That this meeting, whilst desirous of promoting the best interests of fox-hunting, protests against the appointment of any master, until they are in possession of the balance-sheet for the

last two years, to guide them in the conditions necessary to such appointment ; and they also insist that in future at least one-third of the Hunt Committee shall consist of occupiers, whose support to fox-hunting is far greater than that from any other class, entitling them to a share in the management of matters belonging to the Hunt. A list of proposed names is attached for selection. I am requested to ask you to lay this before the meeting, and also to urge the desirability of adjourning the appointment until these matters are settled, and so preventing any unpleasantness to the new master.

On January 5 following the farmers of the Quorn country again held a meeting to consider their position in reference to the new management, the gathering taking place at the Bell Hotel, Leicester, Mr. Nuttall aforesaid being in the chair.

He said he was perfectly aware that the subject required very delicate handling, as some of them knew that the steps which had been taken in the movement had been represented as antagonistic to the interests of fox-hunting ; but, in order to show that such was not the case, he would move "That this meeting begs first to record its strong desire to promote the best interests of fox-hunting, and to take such steps as to insure its long-continued popularity with all classes." His argument was that the occupiers of land contributed their share to the funds of the Hunt, and they had a right to know how the money was expended. He contended further that their contributions as occupiers were equal to that of the largest subscriber, who enjoyed four or five months' hunting in return for his money. If, therefore, they contributed equally to the funds, they were equally entitled to the privileges of the subscribers, and they only asked the committee, in the most friendly spirit, that their interests should be represented on that committee. He was glad to see Mr. Paget present, and hoped he would tell them that the movement had been met in a friendly spirit. No one, he said, was so much interested in fox-hunting as the farmers, and who ought to know better than the farmer when the sport ought to commence and when it should finish ? and who was more competent than the farmer to meet his brother occupier to discuss vexatious claims ? He thought that if the occupiers of land had some standing they would be able to deal with many of

the claim questions which would otherwise have to come before the committee.

Mr. W. B. Paget, as representative of the Quorn Hunt Committee, said that every claim which had been sent to the committee had been settled, and he could assure the meeting that it was the wish of the committee to give every attention to the claims, both for poultry and damage; while the Hunt Committee was anxious that the old committee, which consisted of tenant farmers, should be revived, as they agreed with Mr. Nuttall that it would be of immense assistance in the settlement of claims.

Mr. Nuttall's motion was then carried unanimously.

Mr. Bonnell then moved that, in consequence of the large numbers hunting in Leicestershire, it was desirable that the occupiers of land should have a share in the general management of the Hunt through representatives on the committee, and that was also agreed to.

Meanwhile Captain Warner had purchased the best of Lord Manners's horses, while the stable was strengthened with a good many new purchases, several of them coming from Ireland.

Before cub-hunting was fairly in swing, an alteration in the days of hunting was put on its trial. The custom had been for some time to hunt the country south of the Wreake on Friday and that on the north on Monday, but it was then proposed to reverse that order of things. This, however, was not altogether a novelty, but merely a return to an arrangement which had been in vogue fourteen or fifteen years before.

In December 1886 the death was announced of that well-known sportsman, Captain Horatio Ross, who was born at Rossie Castle, in Forfarshire, in 1801, and died at his home, Rossie Lodge, Inverness, early in December.

Lord Nelson was his godfather, hence his name Horatio. He was gazetted to a dragoon regiment, but left the army before he was twenty-five, and took up his residence at Melton Mowbray, then in the zenith of its fame when Captain Ross saw it for the

first time. His friend and frequent rival, Squire Osbaldeston, was then master of the Quorn. His doings on horseback are well known, and he was one of the first to encourage steeplechasing. As a deerstalker and rifle-shot it is unnecessary to say more of Captain Ross, and for several years he was a well-known attendant in Leicestershire, was exceedingly keen on hunting, and was bad to beat over any country.

The year 1886 went out with a frost which lasted for something like six weeks, and when hunting again became possible, that is to say on Monday, January 24, when the hounds met at Baggrave, the huntsman broke his collar-bone, and for some little time, until he was ready to take the saddle again, the first whipper-in hunted the pack, and with considerable success.

On Friday, January 28, the hounds met at Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, and after a short ring from Cossington Gorse, found another fox at Thrussington Gorse. A third one went away from Ragdale Wood, and for forty-five minutes he ran in a circle by Schoby Scholes. The first whipper-in, who was still acting as huntsman, viewed his fox, when a fresh one jumped up out of a patch of gorse, but soon afterwards the pack was taken home. Two hounds, evidently making a short cut, dashed through a hollow in the woods on to a frozen piece of water, but the ice proved to be thin in the middle, and one of the hounds was unfortunately drowned.

Just as the cub-hunting season (1887-88) was getting towards its last, the death was announced of an old follower of the Quorn, whose name was once a household word in the country, but who might have been forgotten by many who were with the hounds in 1887.

This was Mr. Walter James Little Gilmour, who was born so long ago as 1806, and who died on Friday, December 3, 1887. He was a Scotchman, and early in life came into a clear income of about £12,000 a year, of which he spent comparatively little, and when he gave up hunting retired to his house in North Bank, St. John's Wood, London, where he spent still less; and during

this time his savings must have been immense. "Nimrod's" *Quarterly Review* run brings in Mr. Little Gilmour, who was only twenty years of age in 1826, a year before Mr. Osbaldeston gave up his second period of mastership with the Quorn. The account of that famous run, however, is purely a fancy composition, and, as a matter of fact, Mr. Gilmour did not hunt in Leicestershire when Mr. Osbaldeston was master; he did not visit the shires until Lord Southampton's time, and then in 1829 he was a member of Lord Rokeby's Club at Melton Mowbray, one of his colleagues being Lord Eglinton, the owner of the Flying Dutchman and the organiser of the famous Eglinton tournament.

In Sir Francis Grant's Quorn picture, painted about 1840, he figures too. In the centre is Lady Wilton, sister of a former Earl of Derby, seated in her phaeton, while Lord Wilton, Count d'Orsay, the Duke of Beaufort, the then Duke of Rutland (at that time Marquis of Granby), Lords Chesterfield, Plymouth, Cardigan, Alvanley, Adolphus Fitzclarence, Sir Francis Burdett, Sir David Baird, Sir Harry Goodricke, and many others are also depicted. Of all this brilliant band of horsemen, except the Duke of Rutland, Mr. Little Gilmour was the last survivor.

It may be remembered that Mr. Gilmour and Captain Ross once opposed each other in a curious kind of steeplechase. By the terms of the match each of the antagonists was to touch the other with his hunting-whip, and with the one who succeeded in touching the other first victory was to rest. They dodged about for some distance, and then Mr. Gilmour, who was eventually the winner, managed to touch Captain Ross's hat. In the evening a great dinner was given to celebrate the event.

Three of Mr. Gilmour's best horses, named Vingt-et-Un, Plunder, and Lord Grey, were said by Dick Christian to be amongst the best horses he had ever seen cross Leicestershire, and, said the famous rough-rider, "upon Lord Grey, Mr. Little Gilmour, with sixteen stone of top hamper in the saddle, beat every one last season (1856) in a hot thing from Sproxton to Harby."

Mr. Gilmour was a contemporary, amongst others, of Mr. Stirling Crawford, and that gentleman, with whom Mr. Gilmour was on terms of the deepest affection, paid him the compliment of naming one of his best horses Craigmillar, which, it may be remembered, was one of the sires at the late Mr. Hume Webster's Marden Park

Stud. Craigmillar Castle was part of the Gilmour property.

The season of 1887-88 opened as usual at Kirby Gate, when, in spite of the crowd, a very decent run ensued, the pack making a point of something like eight miles, while for the first thirty minutes hounds ran hard. The best part of the gallop, however, was really seen by three only, and for that piece of good luck they ought to have been, and undoubtedly were, thankful. Several foxes were found at Gartree Hill, but the one to which the hounds were "engaged" was not long in going to ground. Then they drew Burrough Hill Spinney, a covert from which nobody perhaps remembered a run taking place; but on this occasion there was a fox at home, and he showed the run of the day.

On the whole, the season of 1887-88 was about the worst on record, but in March a good run or two took place by way of redemption. The season, however, was not destined to come to an end without some accidents, and in February, when the Quorn hounds were running between Bunny and Clifton, while crossing the farm of Mr. Gunn, near Ruddington, Mr. Barker, who was riding a little way behind Tom Firr, rode at a dead fence through which a wire ran; the huntsman, taught by previous experience, and blessed with a keen eye, had the good luck, it was said, to see the wire, and called to two others to pull up. Mr. Barker, however, unfortunately did not hear the timely warning, as, when two other members of the field galloped up, they found him lying on the ground in an insensible condition. Another accident occurred to Mrs. Murray Smith, sister of Lord Belper, whose shoulder was put out.

The following June saw Lord Combermere, Captain the Hon. F. Johnston, and Mr. E. P. Rawnsley the judges at Peterborough Show, at which the Quorn were

represented ; nor did they go empty away. They took second prize for the best couple of entered hounds, and their Warrior gained the stallion hound prize. They then scored, perhaps rather fortunately, another victory, when the first prize was given to two couples of their young bitches, while the Quorn Fragrance won in the single puppy class. The Quorn rather easily beat the Fitzwilliam in the class for older bitches with Gladness by Grasper, Gambol by Rufford Galliard, Graceless by Galliard, and Paragon by Grasper. There were two more cups to be won, and the Quorn carried off both; so altogether Tom Firr and the master did very well at Peterborough in 1888. Nor must it be left unsaid that the Quorn Warrior won the champion cup given by the Mayor of Peterborough.

In the following December (1888) the Quorn enjoyed a run from Burrough Hill Wood, which was said to be about the best day's sport that the Quorn had seen since the season of 1883-84. Three or four couples of hounds hit off the line at once, forcing the fox into the road, and up the opposite hill, bending slowly to the left and then to the right, after which they ran down the valley over a good country. There was a momentary check in the lane above Thorpe Satchville, which gave those in the second rank time to improve their position, and then away went the hounds on the lower side of Adam's Gorse. They were out of sight for a moment or two, and then they were viewed racing up the hill. In another half mile the Burrough and Twyford road was reached, just where the line branches off to Tilton. About a dozen men were there with the hounds, and a little way beyond Newbold the huntsman viewed the fox in the next field. Hounds were soon after him, but the fox was coursed by a sheep-dog, and a check took place for something like twenty minutes. Hounds had been going at their best pace over a big country, but when the collie joined in the hunt the fox made a curve towards Somerby, but he again reached the valley, and when on his original line he kept steadily on for his point, which proved to be the spinney at Knossington. After the check, however, hounds never ran very hard, but made the most of a failing scent, and whenever occasion served drove him forward at a good pace.

At Knossington another fox turned to the right, and shortly afterwards the end of the run came in Little Owston Wood, where so many fresh foxes were on foot that it was impossible to pick out the hunted one.

The Quorn finished the year 1888 with a hunting run of an hour and forty minutes after meeting at Great Dalby. Gartree Hill, the starting-point of the run, had not been drawn since the hounds met at Kirby Gate, and as plenty of rain had fallen overnight, there appeared to be every chance of a good scent; but the expectation was not more than half realised, for hounds could hunt their fox steadily and no more, except during those few minutes which enter into nearly all hunting runs, when hounds do manage a short burst now and then. Friday the 25th January brought with it a good day's sport. Meeting at Rearsby, there were two short spins, one from Cream Gorse and the other from Ashby Pastures, both ending at the same drain. Thorpe Trussels was then drawn, and a fox found there gave a good run of an hour and fifty minutes. During the remainder of the season several more good runs took place; and a gallop which came off on Friday, February 7, 1890, from Barkly Holt to Hobby Rectory, is only mentioned because hounds had not run that line for several years.

On the 21st March 1890, while hounds were running from Great Dalby, a fatal accident occurred which cast a gloom over the whole of Leicestershire, as Captain Barclay, of Scraftoft Hall, the "Toots" Barclay of many friends, was the victim. In the course of the run a high fence into a road was encountered, and the Captain's horse cleared the fence fairly well, but stumbling on landing through his forefeet getting on to an awkward bank, threw his rider with such violence on his head that Captain Barclay's neck was broken, and he was found to be quite dead on some of the field at once going to the immediate assistance of the unfortunate gentleman.



Captain Barclay was brother to Mr. H. T. Barclay, the owner of that grand horse Bendigo.

When the Quorn met at Brooksby Hall on the 14th March 1890, they bade adieu to Mr. Ernest Chaplin, who was about to leave the country. Until about the year 1896 he was one of the hardest men with the Quorn, but at that time a bad accident put a stop to his riding, at any rate for a time, and both the accident and Mr. Chaplin's departure from Brooksby were keenly regretted. Not many days later Firr's stud was weakened by the death of a horse well known in Leicestershire, an own brother to Gamecock, the famous steeplechaser. The Quorn huntsman rode him for four seasons, and found him one of the most brilliant hunters that ever crossed a country.

The judges at the Peterborough Show, held on the 2nd July 1890, were Captain Carnegy, Mr. Chandos Pole, and Mr. T. Parrington, the last-named having officiated at the first Peterborough Show thirteen years before. In the class for unentered dog hounds, Quorn Coronet, by Belvoir Gambler—Charmer, and Sampson, by Belvoir Gordon—Shapely, won first prize from the representatives sent on by the Atherstone, Bicester, Oakley, Tynedale, and Warwickshire; Quorn Dreamer, by Rufford—Galliard, was the prize stallion hound, the only thing against him being his colour, which was a cream tan, but in all other respects he was well-nigh perfect. It was in 1890 that Mr. B. Paget, whose name has been mentioned before, joined Captain Warner as colleague in the mastership, and on the 13th February 1891, what had so far been the run of the season took place, the fixture being Great Dalby; and when the hounds wound up the season on the 8th April 1891, after meeting at the Kennels, a couple of hounds picked up a piece of poisoned meat and died.

On reading accounts of the Quorn and Belvoir runs,

those who knew the country but slightly may have been puzzled at the constant mention of Holwell Mouth covert. The explanation is that for time out of mind it was a covert common to both the above packs, and, like most compromises, this arrangement did not work quite smoothly ; so before the season 1891-92 opened, Holwell Mouth was made over to the Belvoir, that hunt giving up its claim to draw a string of coverts on a border line which up to that time had never been clearly laid down. After this new arrangement, however, a boundary line between the two hunts was agreed upon, to the intense satisfaction of all concerned.

There is an old saying, "The more splash the more sport," but it was not verified at any rate during the first two months of the season 1891-92. The ground was deep enough in all conscience, and was the cause of a good many tumbles. Mr. Sidney Paget's horse, on landing in a soft place, fell and broke its back, while a lady riding in that gentleman's wake rode over him, though luckily without doing any injury to the prostrate sportsman. About the same time (November 1891) a sad fatality overtook Mr. Hedworth Barclay's stud-groom, Levi Simpkin, who was widely known and respected in Melton Mowbray. Together with a couple of stablemen, Simpkin was clipping and singeing a somewhat fretful hunter. The clipping process had been completed, and soon after the lamp was brought into use, the horse reared, knocked down the stud-groom, who subsequently succumbed to the injuries inflicted by the horse trampling on him. Nor did the mischief stop here, for, on rearing a second time, he knocked down one of the helpers and broke his arm.

A frost in January 1892 suggested to some Leicestershire sportsmen that time might be killed more or less effectively by having a man-hunt with bloodhounds ; so, a youth having been induced to enact the part of a

fugitive, two bloodhounds were put on his line half-an-hour later. They somehow or other hit on the trail of an unsuspecting traveller along the highroad ; him they greatly frightened, and were with some difficulty stopped. Eventually they were put on the track of the original fugitive, and went away at a great pace, throwing their tongues to an extent which almost rivalled in volume the music of the whole of the Quorn pack. In spite of the hard ground and snowdrifts, the owner of the bloodhounds took the fences as they came. In due course they drew up with their quarry, and then the peaceable character of the bloodhound was shown by the fact of their jumping up at the fugitive and trying to lick his face.

The question of unnecessary damage had cropped up in various countries, and of course in the Quorn district, so a circular was issued by the masters, asking their followers to abstain from doing anything which might irritate the farmer "in this unusually wet season," and putting forth a few suggestions for their guidance, among them being, that when hounds were not running the field should keep as much as possible to the roads and headlands, instead of galloping over the grass ; that they should not ride over seeds or sown land ; and that they should keep quiet, and not follow the huntsman when casting the hounds. These hints, though attended to by a certain number, were disregarded by many, as most hunting directions are.

In a season which had been very middling up to that point, the best day the Quorn experienced was on Saturday the 30th of January, when the hounds ran hard for about three-quarters of an hour from Bunny Old Wood, and finally pulled down their fox near Mr. Martin's new farmhouse, the distance being reckoned at seven miles as hounds ran, and five from point to point. The worst fall a man can get is when a horse puts his foot in a rabbit-hole, and this was the hunts-

man's lot early in February 1892; the horse trod upon him, but Firr struggled to his feet and finished the run somehow, though on the morrow, Earp,<sup>1</sup> the first whipper-in, had to take his place. Leicestershire also had to mourn the loss of a good sportsman through an accident, which was unhappily attended with fatal results, befalling Mr. George Harvey, of the Curate's Gorse Farm. He was thrown from his dog-cart, lockjaw eventually set in, and this worthy upholder of hunting succumbed at the early age of forty-one, on Sunday the 8th January 1893. Mr. Harvey was a capital horseman, and would have scored an easy win in the point-to-point race in the previous spring had not his horse fallen at the last fence; but he had his revenge at the following Melton Hunt Steeplechases, when he was on the same horse.

Count Metternich, too, was among those who fell victims to accidents, he sustaining so bad a fall that it was some time before he could be removed from the Bell Hotel, Melton Mowbray, to Belvoir Castle, while Mrs. A. Brocklehurst was much shaken through her horse putting its foot in a rabbit-hole and falling heavily. Then, on the 26th June 1893, Captain Henry Montgomery Campbell died at his place, Thurmaston Hall, Leicester, after a short illness. The Captain, who was formerly in the Royal Artillery, had hunted with the Quorn for many years, was a keen supporter of the Hunt, saw a good deal of fun, and turned up at the end of most long runs, though the inmates of his stable were scarcely up to Leicestershire form. He seldom missed the more important race meetings, and went simply for the love of the thing, for he never betted even in small sums.

To go back a few months, the Quorn men heard with unfeigned regret of the determination of Captain

<sup>1</sup> He left the Quorn, after seventeen years' service, at the end of the season 1897-98, and went to Mr. Fernie.

Warner and Mr. Paget to resign the country at the end of the season 1892-93. Captain Warner had shown himself in all respects an excellent master; he did the best he could for everybody, kept up the best traditions of the Hunt, and found a valuable coadjutor in Mr. Paget. After Captain Warner's seven years' service to the Quorn, it was only in the fitness of things that the question of presenting him with a testimonial should be mooted. The suggestion was adopted, and when the hounds met at Lowesby Hall on the 1st March 1894, the opportunity was taken to present the ex-master with an English silver punch-bowl of the year 1725, and which weighed 108 ounces. The presentation was made by Sir Frederick Fowke, and amongst those present were Lord Lonsdale (who had succeeded to the mastership), the Duchess of Marlborough, the Countess of Wilton, Lady Gerard, Lady Carlyon, Lord Essex, Colonel Forester, Lord Henry Bentinck, Lord Manners, &c.

About four months later, that is to say, in July 1894, Captain Warner appeared as defendant at the Nottingham Assizes in an action brought against him, the huntsman, and Mr. Marshall, a member of the Hunt, by Mr. Willoughby, a farmer, who, until shortly before the action, had occupied land at Great Dalby. The alleged damage was loss of cattle caused by cows in calf picking their calves owing to their being driven by the hounds, also for breaking a gate and lock. The sum claimed for damage was altogether set down at £500, a preposterous amount, which was very properly disputed. After Mr. Justice Wills had summed up, the jury gave a verdict for five shillings against Mr. Marshall, and £51 against Captain Warner and Ferr.

Some of the evidence was rather amusing. The plaintiff first of all fixed the day on which the alleged damage was committed as the 16th of January, but

Captain Warner produced evidence to show that a frost set in on the 23rd of December 1892, and lasted until the 23rd January 1893, during which period hounds were in kennel. The story as told by the plaintiff and his witnesses was that, when the hounds entered the field they ran after the cows, and, jumping up, snapped at their heads and drove them before them, causing them to pick their calves. Captain Warner, however, admitted that the hounds did cross the field in question about the 23rd of January, but he saw no cows. Tom Firr gave evidence to the same effect, and was sure that no cows went in front of hounds; he never heard of any hounds jumping up at cattle, and, with pardonable pride in the behaviour of his own pack, expressed a hope that no hounds of which he had charge would ever be guilty of such unfoxhound-like conduct.

Captain Warner was as good as his word, and retired at the end of the season 1892-93. The horses were sold at the Leicester Repository on the 13th May 1893, by Messrs. Warner, Sheppard, and Wade, twenty-five hunters selling for 1944 guineas, the highest price being 270 guineas.



## THE EARL OF LONSDALE

THE next master of the Quorn was the Earl of Lonsdale, to whom the farmers presented a petition begging him to take the country in the interests of fox-hunting. Lord Lonsdale became master, and at the Puppy Show held in September 1893 spoke pretty plainly about the finance department of hunting. Scarcely had the season 1893-94 opened before the master issued a circular-letter on the subject of second horsemen. He requested those who had second horses out to give orders to their servants to ride with his own second horseman, to jump no fences, and that the last through a gate should shut and hasp it. It was his further wish that second horsemen should confine themselves entirely to roads, lanes, and bye-paths over which there was a right-of-way. The opening fixture of the season, by the way, was Kirby Gate, whence the first draw has for a long time been Gartree Hill, whither a goodly number of people thoughtlessly made their way, oblivious of the fact that there had recently been a death in the family of the owner of the covert. Lord Lonsdale therefore drew Welby Osier Beds first, but only moderate sport followed.

Lord Lonsdale apparently intended to show the farmers of the hunt that they were not forgotten, and he at the same time reminded his followers that they were in duty bound to buy their forage, &c., from the farmers over whose land they rode. In his endeavour to bring producer and consumer together the new master caused

to be compiled a document extending to fourteen pages. The ruler had gone in a business-like way over the sheets, and while the first column contained the names and addresses of the farmers who had forage for sale, the second described the provender, &c., the third stated the quantity to be disposed of, and the fourth was reserved for remarks as to quality, &c.<sup>1</sup> The list was to be revised frequently. Then, before the shooting season closed, Lord Lonsdale placed with Mr. Warner, of Leicester, a huge game order. The tenant farmers, to the number of about 1200, each received a brace of pheasants and a hare; while in October 1894 venison was presented to the puppy walkers.

In previous pages it has been noted how well-known followers of the Quorn had dropped out of the running and joined the great majority, and January 1894 saw the death of one who aforesaid had been one of its best known visitors—Sir Henry Dalrymple des Voeux, who died in London at the age of seventy-two. For many seasons in succession had Sir Henry taken up his winter abode at Melton, where he was not long in gaining universal respect. He was a keen follower of the hounds, and rode to them fearlessly in his younger days. In 1863 he married the youngest daughter of the Earl of Wilton.

During March 1894 Lord Lonsdale invited Mr. Austin Mackenzie, master of the Woodland Pytchley, to meet at Keyham, and have a day in the Quorn country. The hounds were sent by train to Ingarsby, and were met by a large field. A fox was found at Scraftoft, and he ran by Humberstone to Thurmaston, near to which place he contrived to crawl into a faggot

<sup>1</sup> In January 1889 Mr. Robert Lockwood, then Secretary to the Essex Hunt, invited farmers in the county who had either forage or horses for sale to send him a description, which he would register. He also invited hunting men to communicate with him, and in that way he hoped to bring buyer and seller together for their mutual benefit.



heap; whence, on being dislodged, he made his way back to Scraftoft. From there he was hunted at a good pace over the valley to Hungarton and on by Quenby past Lowesby Hall to the railway, where scent failed.

Mention of Lowesby Hall reminds one that the late Mr. Bromley Davenport wrote a poem bearing that name, on the lines of Lord Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," of which the following is a copy. It is believed that "Lowesby Hall" first appeared in 1866 in a book called "Lays of the Belvoir Hunt," a work of which a few copies only were printed, and which is now seldom if ever met with.

### LOWESBY HALL.

BY W. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT.

Gilmour, leave me here a little, until John o' Gaunt be drawn,  
And if you find the raw material, let Jack Morgan blow his horn;

'Tis the place, and all about it, as of old the magpies call,  
Drawing curses from The Lad, and flying over Lowesby Hall.

Lowesby Hall, that in the distance overlooks those grassy plains,  
Swamped from Twyford to the Coplow by the everlasting rains.

Many a morn from yonder spinney, in November drear and chill,  
Have I seen the wily creature slowly creeping up the hill.

And at eve I've watched the vapour of my last remaining weed,  
When my spurs had ceased to animate my apathetic steed.

How in search of sport I've wandered, nourishing a verdant youth  
With the fairy tales of Gallops, ancient runs devoid of truth.

When I looked into my prospects far as ever I could get,  
And felt the wild, delirious joy of getting deeply into debt.

In the Spring the pink no longer clothes the sad Meltonian's breast,  
In the Spring the stump't-up horses are allowed a little rest.

In the Spring, too, he must settle for the cursed corn and hay,  
In the Spring the dire conviction comes upon him—he must pay.

Then my tradesmen all around my door most obstinately clung ;  
And their eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

So I said, " My faithful tailor, do a bit of stiff for me ;  
Trust me yet ; my Uncle's shaky, all his coin shall flow to thee."

O'er his greasy cheek and forehead rushed a colour and a light,  
As I've seen the quick lamplighter turning on the gas at night.

And he said, " I'm proud to serve thee, Sir, as any gent in town ;  
If so shaky be thine Uncle thou shalt have the money down."

Credit seized the glass of time, and dribbled out the golden sand ;  
Every day became more valueless my frequent notes of hand.

Many a morning have I waited, with my hopes upon the rack,  
For the long-expected postman with the letter edged with black.

Health revived my hardy Uncle, now, alas ! he coughs no more,  
And the day of his decease seems more distant than before.

Oh, my tailor shallow-hearted ; oh, my tailor—mine no more ;  
Oh, the dreary, dreary Bond Street ; oh, that Strand's unhappy shore !

I could practise, oh ! how gladly, in the fulness of my hate,  
All the Slasher's last instructions on thine ugly dial plate.

Is it well to use me thus, Sir, having known me, to decline  
Any further cash advances with security like mine ?

But it may be ! thou shalt lower, to the level of a dun,  
Seeking custom with acrostics, like the Moseses and Son.

As the tradesmen, so the customer, and thou shalt measure clowns ;  
They shall pay thee for thy corduroys in ignominious browns.

I would use thee, if my passion might expend its real force,  
Little better than my dog, and something worse than my horse.

What is that which I can turn to ? Can a gentleman descend  
To dig the very gold which nature had intended him to spend ?

I had been content to perish on the sandy Sussex shore,  
Where Militia-men are marshal'd and Minie rifles roar.

But the gentle voice of Cobden drowns the fierce invader's drum ;  
And Napoleon does but bluster, and Frenchmen funk to come.

Could I but relieve in fancy ? But recall the past again ?  
Canst thou ease my wild emotions, oh thou wonderful champagne ?

Give me back the quick pulsations I have often felt before,  
When my horse was on before me, and my hack was at the door.

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming sport would yield,  
And rejoicing at the cropper that I got the second field.

And at night along the highway, in November dark-and chill,  
Saw the lights of Melton shining from the top of Burton Hill.

Then my spirit rushed before me, and I felt the "thirty-four"  
Percolating through my system—noble vintage! now no more.

Brother sportsmen and protectionists rejecting all things new,  
Oh, the future that's impending is a queerish one for you ;

For I've dipped into that future, reading out the book of fate,  
And saw Fox Hunting there abolished by an order of the State.

Saw the heavens filled with guano, raining forth at man's command,  
Showers of unsavoury mixture for the benefit of land.

Saw the airy Navies earthward bear the planetary swell,  
Saw the long-projected railway made from Hanover to H—l.

Saw the landlords yield their acres, after centuries of wrongs,  
To the cotton Lords, to whom, it's proved, all property belongs.

Queen, Religion, State abandoned, and all flags of party furl'd,  
In the Government of Cobden and the dotage of the world.

Then shall outraged common sense espouse some other planet's cause,  
Then shall rogues abound in England, bonneting the slumbering laws.

Here at least I'll stay no longer ; let me seek for some abode,  
Deep in some provincial country far from rail and turnpike road ;

There to break all links of habit, and to find a secret charm  
In the mysteries of manuring and the produce of a farm.

There deplore the fall of barley, there discuss the rise in peas,  
Over flagons of October, giant mounds of bread and cheese ;

Never company to dinner, never visitors from town,  
Except the Parson and the Doctor (Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown).

Droops the heavy conversation to an after-dinner snort,  
And articulation dwindles with the second flask of port.

Here methinks would be enjoyment more than at the festive board,  
At the hunger-mocking, kickshaw-covered table of a Lord.

There my heart shall beat no longer with my passion's foolish throbs—  
I will wed some vulgar woman, she shall rear my race of snobs ;

Double-jointed, mutton-fisted, they shall run, for they shan't ride,  
Hunting with the York and Ainsty, or the Harriers of Brookside.

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are stuff,  
I who hold the swell provincial lower than the Melton Muff.

I to hunt with fustian jackets ! my remaining years to pass—  
With the refuse of Protection, in a land devoid of grass. ♣

Tied to one perpetual woman, what to me were soil or clime ?  
I who never could endure the same for ten days at a time.

I who held it better to pursue the patriarchal plan  
Than tamely to submit to a monopoly of man ?

Hark ! my merry comrades call me, and Jack Morgan blows his horn,  
I to whom their foolish pastime is an object of my scorn.

Can a sight be more disgusting, more absurd a paradox,  
Than two hundred people riding madly at one fox ?

Will his capture on the morrow any satisfaction bring ?  
I am sham'd thro' all my nature to have done so flat a thing.

Weakness, to be wroth with weakness, I'm an idiot for my pains ;  
Nature made for every sportsman an inferior set of brains.

Not in vain the distance beckons—what's that skirting the hill side ?  
'Tis THE FOX ! I'll bet a hundred—forward ! forward ! let me ride.

I'm before them and they curse me, but no matter, go along ;  
Better fifty yards before the hounds than ten behind the throng.

Oh, I hear you ! you may holloa ! but my spirit knows no bounds ;  
Curse the scent and blast the master, rot the huntsman, d—n the  
hounds.

Ha ! ha ! ha ! was that an oxer ? What ? old Rambler ? is he dead ?  
Never mind ! Pick up the pieces ; he was mortal ; go ahead !

They've lost him, and I did it ! Oh, of course, I always do !  
Here's Sir Richard—black as thunder ; I'll evaporate, adieu !

Plough the grass ; erect wire fences ; shoot the foxes ; freeze and snow ;  
Yes, I can catch the train at Leicester : so to Euston Square I go.

When hounds meet in towns the occasion is always popular, and though the kennel address is “Quorn, Loughborough,” the inhabitants of the town see as a rule little or nothing of hounds. Councillor Mayo, however, came to the conclusion that it would not be a bad idea if Lord Lonsdale could be induced to meet

one day in the Market Place, Loughborough, and the master consented to do so, fixing Tuesday the 26th March 1894 for the gathering, the hour being noon. The weather was most propitious, and long before the appointed hour the square began to fill, while the forenoon trains landed a large contingent: it was estimated that about ten thousand people were present. From the town hall to the other side of the street an archway had been erected, on which was to be seen the legend, "Success to Fox-hunting." Lord Lonsdale, Lady Gerard, Mr. Atherley, and Mr. Barclay drove up in an open carriage, and came in for much cheering, as also did the huntsman and whippers-in on arriving with the pack. The Mayor's parlour was the scene of much hospitality, and when the hounds moved off for the first draw they were followed, as a spectator remarked, by a curious collection of "mounts and machines." The meeting was a great success, and perhaps nothing more enthusiastic had been witnessed since Mr. Baker, then master of the North Warwickshire, met for the edification of the distressed weavers at Coventry railway station on the 25th February 1861, on which occasion a military officer estimated the attendance at between thirty and forty thousand people.

On an earlier page mention was made of the Melton Hunt balls, but those entertainments appear to have dropped out of fashion until they were revived in February 1895. For the preceding decade the members of the Hunt had joined with the townspeople in attending what had been known as the Primrose League ball, but it lost its attraction, so it was determined to drop it and revive the Melton Hunt ball, which took place in the Corn Exchange and proved a great success, many of those who had been driven from Leicestershire by frost making a special pilgrimage back again in order to be present. In the summer of 1895 there were on view

eight pictures of the Quorn Hunt painted by Mr. G. D. Giles, which were very generally approved of; but as they are of tolerably recent execution, and as most Leicestershire men have seen them, it is unnecessary here to review them again.

It was in 1891, during the mastership of Captain Warner and Mr. Paget, that Lord Lonsdale covered twenty miles in 56 minutes 55 $\frac{1}{5}$  seconds, including the time in changing, a feat which would have immensely delighted Squire Osbaldeston. The story runs that while Lord Lonsdale was staying at Ingestre with Lord Shrewsbury conversation turned upon driving and speed. Lord Lonsdale ventured to remark, or is said to have done so, that first-class trotters would always beat gallopers. Eventually a match was made for £100 a side to cover twenty miles in four styles of driving, either competitor to trot or gallop as he pleased. Lord Shrewsbury eventually paid forfeit; but Lord Lonsdale, determined to show what could be done, went through the programme. He first started with a single horse in a buggy and drove the five miles in 13 minutes 39 $\frac{1}{2}$  seconds; the return journey was accomplished with a pair of horses in 12 minutes 51 $\frac{2}{5}$  seconds. A coach and four was driven for the third five miles, which occupied 15 minutes 9 $\frac{2}{5}$  seconds, and for the final five miles Lord Lonsdale drove postillion fashion, the journey taking 13 minutes 55 $\frac{4}{5}$  seconds. There were two short delays—one caused by a waggon, the other by the police. The performance took place on the 11th March 1891, not far from Reigate.

On Monday the 28th of March 1898, Mr. J. D. Cradock, who for more than a dozen years had been secretary to the Quorn Hunt, was presented with a richly deserved testimonial, consisting of a silver cup and a cheque. As Lord Belper mentioned, in making the presentation, his father and grandfather before him

had befriended the Quorn; so a short notice of the family's connection with the Quorn Hunt may not prove uninteresting.

For how long the Cradocks had been settled in Leicestershire we do not know, but at any rate a Mr. John Cradock was one of the most prominent leaders and supporters of the Quorn Hunt from the time of Mr. Meynell down to that of Sir Harry Goodricke; and in consideration of the valuable honorary services he rendered to the Quorn, a handsome piece of plate was presented to him by the members of the Hunt. He was about the oldest fox-hunter in Leicestershire at the time of his death, which event took place in 1833, Sir Harry Goodricke, Lord Plymouth, and Mr. Cradock all dying at about the same time, so that within a very few weeks Leicestershire had to mourn the loss of three of her best known sportsmen. Mr. Cradock had the management of the coverts in Lord Foley's time (1802), while during the reign of succeeding masters he was "the Metternich of the hunt"; he was an out and out sportsman, and did more than all others put together to conciliate the farmers, and, when he departed this life, no man was more sincerely mourned.

Mr. Cradock's son John was born about 1792, and was, if anything, even a more enthusiastic fox-hunter than his father had been. He went to school first at Ashbourne, and then to Rugby; he afterwards became a solicitor, and in partnership with his brother, Mr. Thomas Cradock, maintained the reputation which had long attached to the firm. Year in, year out, every day that he could spare from professional duties—it has been whispered that he induced his brother to do a fair share of his work—was spent either in hunting or furthering the cause of the sport. From November to April he was in the field as often as possible, and from April to November scarcely a day passed on which some scheme for the benefit of the Hunt did not receive his serious attention. He was, too, a capital judge of a horse, and no one ever saw him badly mounted. When Mr. Errington (master from 1835 to 1838) was absent Mr. John Cradock invariably acted as field master, and on one occasion, after a fox had been found near Six Hills, a gentleman, mounted on a headstrong grey horse, was seen riding on the very backs of the hounds, a fog prevailing at the time. Mr. Cradock on that occasion dispensed with his usual easy and persuasive manner, and rated the offender in no

measured speech. "I could not hold my stupid horse," was the offender's explanation. "Those that can't should stay at home," retorted Mr. Cradock. "Let me know the days on which you are master, and I will," replied the transgressor; but ere the sun had set Mr. Cradock went up to the rider of the grey and begged that his "transient ebullition might be earthed, for it was earthy." Mr. John Cradock married a daughter of Mr. Robert Piper, of Yorkshire, and died in 1838 from influenza—so the fiend was about even then.

The next of the family to become prominently connected with the Quorn was Mr. Thomas Cradock, presumably his brother, as Mr. John Cradock left no issue. He appears to have been secretary during the mastership of Sir Richard Sutton, for he defended the baronet when he was sued for trespass in the county court by a tenant farmer for damage committed by riding over his land. Mr. Thomas Cradock, "the assessor of damages"—for he it was who held the balance at the season's end, and listened to the wail of the complaining farmer—while denying that any damage had been committed, offered the farmer a reasonable sum, but the offer was refused, the farmer hoping to "strangle fox-hunting altogether." Into the box went the plaintiff, and swore to a man wearing a velvet cap riding over his land. Mr. Cradock thereupon proved that many followers of the Quorn wore black velvet caps—"dashers" they were called in the time of Mr. Meynell. The offender wore a red coat, urged the farmer, and Mr. Cradock, in his blandest tones, pointed out that more than half of the followers of Sir Richard's hounds were similarly arrayed, so as the farmer could not swear that Sir Richard Sutton was the trespasser, he was "grassed and saddled with costs," as the hunting people phrased it.

Sir Richard Sutton was master from 1847 to 1856, in which year he died, and shortly before his decease he decided that "some lasting token of his appreciation of the services rendered" by Mr. Thomas Cradock should be presented to him; but he did not live to carry out his intention. But the expressed wish of the late baronet was not forgotten by his family, so after some little delay there was a small dinner-party at Quorndon Hall, at which Mr. Cradock, the members of Sir Richard Sutton's family, and a few friends, were present. Mr. Tidd Pratt, one of Sir Richard Sutton's executors, was deputed to offer Mr. Cradock the testimonial, which consisted of a silver candelabrum with six branches,



with a flower vase in the centre. On the pedestal were engraven Mr. Cradock's crest and an inscription, while at intervals round the base were frosted silver figures—a fox and cub, a fox breaking covert, and a hound in hot pursuit.

So far as I can understand, the above appears to have been a private testimonial from the Sutton family, but seven years later, that is to say, in 1863, Mr. Cradock's good offices to the Hunt were recognised by the members at large. On April 10, 1863, about thirty of the subscribers to the testimonial dined at the King's Head, Loughborough, Mr. W. P. Herrick being in the chair. The chairman spoke in terms of the highest respect of Mr. Cradock's father and brother, and duly made the presentation. The testimonial, which consisted of plate of the value of 200 guineas, comprised a large silver salver, two pairs of candlesticks, and a pair of fruit and flower stands, an inscription stating that the testimonial was offered by members of the Hunt in testimony of their appreciation of his zealous and gratuitous services as secretary and treasurer of the Hunt for a period of upwards of twenty-three years.

The official connection of one family with a Hunt for so long a time, save in the case of the mastership of family packs, is, we should say, almost unique. For upwards of a hundred years—there may have been an interval—has the Cradock family performed yeoman service to the Quorn Hunt, and the function of 1898 is remarkable for the fact that it made the fourth testimonial presented to the family, while had Mr. John Cradock the second lived a little longer his merits would certainly have been recognised in similar fashion.

In the autumn of 1896 Lord Lonsdale threatened to resign the country, but ultimately consented to continue in office. In 1898, however, the end came, and Captain E. Burns Hartopp was appointed his successor.



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## ERRATA

- Page 6, line 10, *for* 'Healey' *read* 'Henley.'
- ,, 25, ,, 19, *for* 'Gadsby' *read* 'Gaddesby.'
- ,, 28, ,, 4 from bottom, *for* 'Nicholls' *read* 'Nicoll.'
- ,, 36, ,, 11, *for* 'Throsley' *read* 'Throsby.'
- ,, 39, ,, 10 from bottom, *for* 'Muster's' *read* 'Musters's.'
- ,, 47, ,, 2 ,, *for* 'head' *read* 'lead.'
- ,, 91, ,, 8 ,, *for* 'cannon' *read* 'canon.'
- ,, 113, ,, 5 ,, *for* 'Brawnston' *read* 'Braunstone.'
- ,, 127, ,, 17, *for* 'Cleaves' *read* 'Eaves.'
- ,, 129, ,, 13, *for* 'rigueur' *read* 'rigueur.'
- ,, 148, ,, 12 from bottom, *for* 'T. Moore' *read* 'J. Moore.'
- ,, 234, ,, 3 and 10 from bottom, *for* 'Craddock' *read* 'Cradock.'
- ,, 238, ,, 3 from bottom, *for* 'Counterthorpe' *read* 'Countesthorpe.'
- ,, 249, 250, 251, 294, 305, *for* 'Storey' *read* 'Story.'
- ,, 252, 286, *for* 'Ashfordby' *read* 'Asfordby.'
- ,, 296, line 19, *for* 'Trussells' *read* 'Trussels.'
- ,, 331, 332, 336, *for* 'Lord Wilton' *read* 'Lord Grey de Wilton.'
- ,, 354, line 2 from bottom, *for* 'Shephard' *read* 'Sheppard.'
- ,, 366, ,, 2 ,, *for* 'Johnston' *read* 'Johnstone.'















